



# L I T E R A R Y *Cavalcade*

A MONTHLY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES



Bringing Home the Christmas Tree • A Painting by Norman Rockwell

LITERARY CAVALCADE, a Magazine  
for High School English Classes Pub-  
lished Monthly During the School Year  
One of the SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES


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#### OUR FRONT COVER



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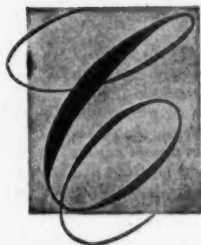
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# LITERARY Cavalcade

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## Lesson Plans

## Topics for Discussion

## Activities

## Vocabulary

## Reading Lists

### Topics for Discussion

#### 1. "Pablo and Blanco" (p. 1)

Why does Pablo's inheritance of fifty dollars seem like such a vast sum to the other villagers? How does he spend the money? Is his generosity rewarded? How? You probably noticed that this short story is written in the deceptively simple style of a fairy tale or a fable. How does the author achieve this effect? Be specific. Is the style appropriate to what he is trying to say? Explain.

#### 2. "Jug of Silver" (p. 3)

What method does Applesseed use to determine the amount of money in the jug? Why is he sure from the very beginning that he will guess right? The narrator thinks—and no doubt accurately—that Hamurabi is a bit of a fake. But is the self-styled Egyptian dentist a pretty genuine human being in other respects? Explain. Is it a gift for himself that Applesseed buys with his twenty-five cents? When he finally wins the money in the jug, how does he spend it? In addition to its gentle people, does this story have an "Old Scrooge" too? If so, who? Explain how his character fits into the Christmas tradition set by the villain-hero of Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. Is there any reason why Truman Capote should have called his central character "Applesseed"? Comment on the narrator's statement: "Small towns are best for spending Christmas."

#### 3. "Pedal Bombard" (p. 8)

What does James Hilton mean when he says of Christmas, 1913, "The word commercial was still an adjective"? Do you think that the people of this mining town got their greatest pleasure out of spending a lot of money on Christmas gifts? Explain. Describe the relationship of Hilton's family with the rest of his relatives. Describe the relationship of the author's final reference to the Christmas truce of 1914.

#### 4. New Poems, by Carl Sandburg (p. 10)

In the poem, "Special Starlight," Carl

but was dissatisfied with himself. Account for his discontent. What was so rewarding about his new career of storytelling? Could it have anything to do with the fact that he was giving wholeheartedly, and for nothing, of his great energy and talent? Explain the final allusion to himself as Santa Claus.

#### 6. "Young Voices" (p. 14)

Does a Christmas setting for Emma Sue Rexrode's essay seem especially appropriate? Give reasons for your answer. Explain her reference to "the seasons of Grandma's love." What sort of life was her grandmother's? Would you say that it was a "giving" one? Explain. What does the author mean when she says at the end of the essay, "I never tasted gingerbread again"?

#### 7. "Cyrano" (p. 18)

What qualities did Cyrano possess that make him an ideal hero for this Christmas season? Is there a lesson for our day in the figure of a man who spends a lifetime fighting to preserve his integrity, to protect the underdog, to give happiness to someone he loves? Explain the symbol of the white plume which Cyrano mentions just before his death.

### Suggested Activities

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Write a short short story in the simple, direct style of a fable or a fairy tale. Theme: a Christmas present, given or received, that has more sentimental than commercial value. Don't forget to include the conventional "ending with a twist!"

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Write a short story in which some object (like the jug in this story) becomes a symbol of the Christmas spirit. Suggestions: a Christmas stocking; a basket of fruit; a "collector's item" from a gift shop; a family heirloom, or some other precious personal possession, that comes as a surprise gift to a friend. If possible, stress excitement and competition. Choose a local setting or one with which you're equally familiar.

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#### 5. "Storytelling" (p. 12)

Using the autobiographical sketch as your form, write about some activity you organized and directed that gave unusual pleasure to a group of people. Examples: a party for underprivileged children, a visit to a home for the aged or blind or destitute, a social evening with a group of refugees, a family birthday or anniversary.

#### 6. "Young Voices" (p. 14)

- Write a story that, like James Robinson's "To Save the World," combines elements of science fiction with a Christmas theme.
- Do a character sketch of the most warm-hearted and unselfish individual you've ever known.

#### 7. "Cyrano" (p. 18)

Get three classmates to join you in a panel discussion of the question, "Are the values Cyrano lived by practical in our day?"

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- Write a humorous essay describing the effect on your friends, family, teachers, etc., of your aspirations to be an actor (or actress).
- Build a short story, essay, or skit on the adventures or misadventures of taking part in a class play.
- Does the idea of "doing" *Life with Mother* as the class play appeal to you? Ask several classmates to join you in an informal reading of the play. That way, you'll get an idea of how the play stacks up as a possible

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## • POST-CHRISTMAS PLANNING

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Give us the name of one of your colleagues in the English Department and we'll be happy to send him or her a complimentary copy of *Literary Cavalcade*, with a friendly letter of introduction.

**A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

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# One-Period Lesson Plan

## The Time of Giving

### Aim

To show pupils that the "Christmas spirit" is really generosity—but not generosity in the commercial sense!

### Motivation

What was the best Christmas present you ever received? Did it cost a great deal of money?

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Sandburg finds a new and contemporary meaning in the events of Christ's life, and especially his birth. What is that meaning? Do you think that this poem is simply an argument against war? Or has it something else to say? Explain.

#### 5. "Storytelling" (p. 12)

In this autobiographical sketch, Charles Laughton tells how he had been doing very well as a Hollywood actor, but was dissatisfied with himself. Account for his discontent. What was so rewarding about his new career of storytelling? Could it have anything to do with the fact that he was giving wholeheartedly, and for nothing, of his great energy and talent? Explain the final allusion to himself as Santa Claus.

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#### 3. "Pedal Bombard" (p. 8)

Write a familiar essay (approximately 1,000 words) about the happiest Christmas of your life.

#### 4. Poetry (p. 10)

- Write a précis (digest) of each of these four poems. (A précis shouldn't exceed one-third the length of the original.)
- Base your next book report on any one of the volumes of poetry by Carl Sandburg mentioned in his biography (p. 10).
- Write a free-verse poem with a Christmas theme.

#### 5. "Storytelling" (p. 12)

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class dramatics venture. (Note that Gladys Hurlbut offers some hints on production and dramatic interpretation!)

### VOCABULARY EXERCISES

On the paper you've just been given, number from 1 to 28. I'm going to read slowly each of the following incomplete sentences. Next I shall read the three word choices given at the end of each sentence. Write opposite the appropriate number on your paper the word that best completes the sentence. When you've finished, exchange papers with a student near you, and we'll check the correct answers. Finally you'll be allowed fifteen minutes to discuss words and use them in original sentences.

(Note to teacher: The italicized words are your key to correct answers. You are also given the page and column in *Literary Cavalcade* where the word appears.)

- The future chief of his tribe was born in an \_\_\_\_\_ hut.  
a. abode  
b. apodal.  
c. *adobe* (p. 1-1)
- The little house crouched in the shade of a \_\_\_\_\_ tree.  
a. *paloverde* (p. 1-1)  
b. palomino  
c. palindrome
- Having obtained a \_\_\_\_\_ at the consulate, I was ready to begin my journey.  
a. virus  
b. *vias* (p. 8-1)  
c. vista
- "I'd like some details of your previous business experience," the personnel manager said. "May I see your \_\_\_\_\_?"  
a. dorsal  
b. dowry  
c. *dossier* (p. 8-1)
- All afternoon the boys prowled through the cave in search of Captain Kidd's treasure \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. *trove* (p. 8-1)  
b. troth  
c. tryst
- Joe Magarac is one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ figures in American folklore.  
a. *fabulous* (p. 8-1)  
b. fallacious  
c. fatuous
- At the last moment, the candidate tore up his prepared speech and gave an \_\_\_\_\_ talk.  
a. importunate  
b. *impromptu* (p. 8-2)  
c. impoverished
- The congregation sat in rapt silence while the organist played the closing \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. vicissitude  
b. vagary  
c. *volutary* (p. 8-2)
- "I just felt a twinge," Aunt Martha complained. "Guess my \_\_\_\_\_ is acting up again."  
a. *sciatica* (p. 8-3)  
b. schizophrenia  
c. schism
- An embarrassing \_\_\_\_\_ in the conversation was filled by Maria's discreet little cough.  
a. hibiscus  
b. *hiatus* (p. 8-3)  
c. histamine
- Mother's derogatory remarks hardly \_\_\_\_\_ confidence.  
a. envisage  
b. *engender* (p. 8-3)  
c. enumerate
- He had the \_\_\_\_\_ notion that he could communicate with the departed spirit of his great-uncle.  
a. myriad  
b. mellifluous  
c. *mystical* (p. 9-1)
- During the last war, many a foxhole atheist recovered his faith in the \_\_\_\_\_ of prayer.  
a. effete  
b. *efficacy* (p. 9-1)  
c. effigy
- Always a \_\_\_\_\_ for the truth, I told Father that it was I, and not Benjy, who'd taken the television set apart.  
a. heckler  
b. *stickler* (p. 9-1)  
c. buckler
- In moments of excitement, he forgot all the English he knew and lapsed into the \_\_\_\_\_ of his Pennsylvania-Dutch ancestors.  
a. idiosyncrasy  
b. *idiom* (p. 10-1)  
c. ideology
- "As I see it," said the director, "the action \_\_\_\_\_ in a terrific chase, with G-men, gangsters, innocent bystanders, and speeding cars."  
a. consummates  
b. commemorates  
c. *culminates* (p. 10-1)
- The choir finished with a lovely \_\_\_\_\_ called "The Shepherds' Hymn."  
a. *canticle* (p. 10-2)  
b. canonical  
c. chanticleer
- At the head of the procession rode the mounted guard in their gold and crimson \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. parody  
b. *panoply* (p. 11-1)  
c. penury
- The machinist discovered that several broken \_\_\_\_\_ prevented the wheel from engaging with the chain.  
a. *sprockets* (p. 11-2)  
b. dockets  
c. rockets
- It seems to be a tradition of opera for the \_\_\_\_\_ farewells of hero and heroine to last about an hour.  
a. puerile  
b. piquant  
c. *poignant* (p. 11-2)
- The form of poetry known as blank verse is written in unrhymed iambic \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. tetrameter  
b. hexameter  
c. *pentameter* (p. 13-2)
- In his levis and derby hat he was, to say the least, an \_\_\_\_\_ sight.  
a. innocuous  
b. *incongruous* (p. 13-2)  
c. incorporeal
- I could tell by the \_\_\_\_\_ gleam in his eye that he was planning some kind of skulduggery.  
a. benevolent  
b. grandiloquent  
c. *malevolent* (p. 13-2)
- He had a police record of petty thefts and disturbing the peace which gave him an \_\_\_\_\_ reputation in the town.  
a. *un savory* (p. 13-2)  
b. unpremeditated  
c. unimpeachable
- In a \_\_\_\_\_, long-winded speech he reminded the committee of its good fortune in having him as chairman.  
a. pantheistic  
b. *pompous* (p. 13-2)  
c. posthumous
- Once out in the cold cruel world, you'll look back wistfully on these \_\_\_\_\_ high-school days.  
a. hazardous  
b. heterogeneous  
c. *halcyon* (p. 14-1)
- As business manager and art and literary editor of the yearbook, he proved again how \_\_\_\_\_ he is.  
a. virulent  
b. *versatile* (p. 15-1)  
c. vicarious
- In my opinion, fantasy is delightful, but carried to the point of \_\_\_\_\_ it sometimes becomes cloying.  
a. *whimsy* (p. 15-1)  
b. wizardry  
c. rallyery



## PABLO and BLANCO

*Our friend Pablo was poor, but he had one thing Carlos lacked—and could never buy even with all his money*

By JOSEPH KELLEAM

Illustration by Harrison von Dyke

**P**ABLO MENDOZA and his grandmother were Papago Indians who lived in a tiny village in southern Arizona. Pablo was a brown-faced, plump young man of twenty. He had straight black hair and a wide smile. He also owned an old white horse named Blanco.

Pablo and his grandmother lived in a tiny house made of brown adobe bricks. The roof was flat and covered with dirt to keep it cool. All the houses in the village looked alike. But you could tell Pablo's house because near the doorway stood the largest paloverde tree on the whole desert. It had bright green bark and tiny leaves no larger than your fingernails, and in the spring it was covered with yellow blossoms.

Pablo liked to sit in the shade of the paloverde tree and play *La Paloma* on his guitar. But one gets tired of playing the guitar, and he would often lean back against the tree, pull his big floppy-brimmed hat over his face, and go to sleep. His grandmother had a little garden near the bed of a wash. A wash is where a river would be if it rained long enough. Here the ground

was not so dry as the rest of the desert, and so she raised beans and pumpkins and squash.

Old Blanco did nothing at all. He just stood near the house, switching his tail at the flies, and nibbling grass.

The little village was very quiet. But one day something happened. Across the desert came a cloud of dust. Underneath the dust was a car, and in the car was a big man smoking a big cigar. The old Head Man of the village came out of his house when the car came to a stop and asked the big stranger what he wanted.

"I am looking for Pablo Mendoza," the man said.

The Head Man pointed to Pablo, who was sitting under his paloverde tree, watching the stranger through a hole in his hat. Everyone in the village guessed that Pablo was going to be carried away to jail.

The big man walked over to Pablo, and Pablo got up and stretched and

yawned. "Are you Pablo Mendoza?" the man asked.

Pablo said yes.

So the stranger told him that his uncle at Little Tucson had died and left Pablo fifty dollars. He got Pablo to sign a receipt and handed him five ten-dollar bills and climbed back into his car. When he had gone, all the people of the town told Pablo he was rich and that they were glad.

The next day Pablo went to the store of Carlos Kisto. Kisto was old and wrinkled and his dark eyes were like little black stones. He was the only Papago besides Pablo who was rich. He had owned his little trading post for years. He smiled at Pablo, but his eyes did not smile. "I hear you have money," he said.

"Yes," said Pablo. "I have money. I want a red silk shirt and a purple silk handkerchief for a necktie, and a big black hat with a floppy brim and a white band. Also a new shawl for my

grandmother, a new string for my guitar, some candy and soda pop, a sack of flour, and a bushel of oats for Blanco."

After Pablo paid for these things, he still had thirty dollars. It was nice to sit in the shade and drink soda pop and eat candy and play *La Paloma* on his guitar, which sounded ever so much better with the new string. Pablo's round, dark face was one big smile. He loved the whole world.

But soon he learned how troubled a rich man's life can be. His neighbors came and stood around him with sad faces and looked at the ground. They told him of their troubles. One needed a shirt. One old lady had no pumpkin seeds. Another said her children had nothing to eat. One man said his children had never tasted candy. One wanted a watch chain. One needed a bridle rein. Some needed flour.

PABLO'S heart was troubled, so he told his neighbors to go to Kisto's store and buy what they needed. He sent word to Carlos that he would pay him later. Then, feeling much better, he covered his face with the new hat and leaned against the paloverde and went to sleep. It was sundown when he awoke. Carlos was standing near by with his hand full of papers and a scowl on his lean, dark face. "I want my money," he said. "You should not be sleeping while others work."

"But I am rich," Pablo explained. And he opened his hand and showed Carlos the paper bills.

"I have let your neighbors have all they wanted from my store," Carlos said frowning. "Here are the tickets. You have been very foolish to buy so much for them."

"Ah, but I have made them happy," Pablo replied with a smile. "And I am happy too."

Then Carlos began to read the lists and add up the figures. "Forty dollars," he announced at last.

Pablo's heart sank. "There is a mistake, Carlos. I have only thirty dollars."

"What! You do not have the money?" Carlos' frown was darker than ever. "You cannot pay? I will have you put in jail."

"No, Carlos, I will pay. Here, take the thirty dollars and Blanco."

"Bah. That bony old horse is not worth a peso."

"Then take my guitar."

Carlos snarled. "I do not like music. No, you must pay."

Pablo had a pleasant thought. "Carlos, I will work in the store for you."

"And drink all the pop?" stormed

Carlos. "No. But listen!" Then he told Pablo that he was in love with a beautiful young girl. "Her father is wealthy," Carlos explained. "He has seven cows and a bull. She says I am too old and will not marry me."

"Too bad," said Pablo. "But I do not see—"

"You can tell her of my many good qualities. And if you can get the girl to marry me, I will not send for the policeman."

"But I do not think I can," wailed Pablo.

"Then I will call the policeman."

Pablo shrugged his shoulders. "Very well. Who is she?"

"Carmenita, the daughter of George Percharo who lives at Posto Redondo. And you must give me her answer by sundown tomorrow."

"Very well," said Pablo, "I will try."

The next morning at daybreak Pablo told his grandmother good-by. He threw an old blanket over Blanco's bony back and the two of them set out on the long, hot trip. The sun came up and beamed at them. It climbed higher and scorched them. Blanco began to stumble.

They climbed many rocky hills. They passed the sandy beds of washes and went on and on. By noontime Blanco was so tired that Pablo dismounted. They were walking along the dusty hot trail together when they came within sight of the brown adobe houses of Posto Redondo.

A man was reclining in front of one of these houses with his hat pulled down over his face.

"I am looking for Carmenita, whose father is George Percharo," Pablo said.

The man pointed to a girl who was watching from a doorway.

Pablo and Blanco walked up to her. Poor Pablo's heart was beating like a hammer. She was the most beautiful girl he had even seen. Her skin was the light tan of a dried paloverde leaf. Her hair was black and shining. Her eyes were large and black and her eyelashes were long and curly.

"Are you Carmenita?" Pablo asked. She nodded.

"I am Pablo Mendoza and I have a message from Carlos Kisto."

She laughed easily. "I know your message. He wants to marry me. I have told him no."

Then Pablo told her how he owed Kisto ten dollars and would go to jail if he did not persuade her to marry the old man.

"That is too bad," she said, "but I will not marry him. I have three reasons why I will not."

"And what are they?" asked Pablo.

"I will not tell you, Pablo Mendoza.

But since you are in trouble I will go with you and ask Carlos not to call the policeman."

It was nearly sundown when they came to Pablo's home. Carlos was leaning against the paloverde tree, waiting. "Well?" he asked.

"I tried," Pablo pleaded, "but she says she will not marry you for three reasons."

"And what are they?" Carlos stamped his foot. "You have failed and I will call the policeman."

Pablo shrugged his plump shoulders. The sun was setting and the Arizona sky was streaming with scarlet and purple. People were peeping from houses. Some were coming this way.

"My first reason," said Carmenita, "is that I will marry a young man."

"Bah," said Carlos Kisto. "Here is a young man and he is going to jail."

"My second reason," said Carmenita, "is that I will marry a generous man."

"Bah," said Carlos. "Here is a generous man and he is going to jail."

Carmenita looked at Pablo. "Yes," she said, "Pablo is generous."

AT that particular moment the whole village was gathering about them. There were old women and children carrying packages. There were lean men holding paper sacks in their hands.

The Head Man then began to speak. "Carlos, we hear Pablo is in trouble because he bought gifts for us. We can do without them. But we cannot do without Pablo. So take them to your store—"

They began to throw packages and bundles and sacks at Carlos' feet.

Carlos stamped in rage. "I will not take them. He must pay."

"Take them," said the old Head Man sternly.

Angrily, Carlos gathered up the packages. He looked at Carmenita. "And what is your third reason for not marrying me?"

Carmenita spoke softly. "My husband must have many friends."

Carlos did not say "Bah." He looked at Pablo.

"Yes," said Carmenita. "Pablo has many friends."

And if you should go to a little Papago village in southern Arizona, you will find Pablo sitting under his paloverde tree, playing his guitar or making believe he is asleep with his floppy-brimmed hat over his face. But since he is married to Carmenita, and two women can raise more pumpkins and beans and squash than one can, he is much fatter. And so is Blanco. And so is Pablo's grandmother. And so are all the little Pablos and Carmenitas.

And getting fatter all the time...





By TRUMAN CAPOTE

Illustrations by Katherine Churchill Tracy

## Jug of Silver

**Nobody expected the jug of silver to produce a miracle—and maybe it wasn't a miracle—but it happened on Christmas Eve**

AFTER school I used to work in the Valhalla drugstore. It was owned by my uncle, Mr. Ed Marshall. I call him Mr. Marshall because everybody, including his wife, called him Mr. Marshall. Nevertheless, he was a nice man.

Now this drugstore was maybe old-fashioned, but it was large and dark and cool; during summer months there was no pleasanter place in town. At the left, as you entered, was a tobacco-magazine counter behind which, as a rule, sat Mr. Marshall, a squat, square-faced, pink-fleshed man with looping, manly, white mustaches. Beyond this counter stood the beautiful soda fountain. It was very antique and made of fine, yellowed marble, smooth to the touch but without a trace of cheap glaze. Mr. Marshall bought it at an auction in New Orleans in 1910 and was plainly proud of it. When you sat on the high, delicate stools and looked across the fountain you could see yourself reflected softly, as though by candlelight, in a row of ancient, mahogany-framed mirrors. All general merchandise

was displayed in glass-doored, curiolike cabinets that were locked with brass keys. There was always in the air the smell of syrup and nutmeg and other delicacies.

Now the Valhalla was the gathering place of Wachata County till a certain Rufus McPherson came to town and opened a second drugstore directly across the courthouse square. This old Rufus McPherson was a villain; that is, he took away my uncle's trade. He installed fancy equipment such as electric fans and colored lights; he provided curb service and made grilled cheese sandwiches to order. Naturally, though some remained devoted to Mr. Marshall, most folks couldn't resist Rufus McPherson.

For a while, Mr. Marshall chose to ignore him; if you were to mention McPherson's name he would sort of snort, finger his mustaches, and look the other way. But you could tell he was mad. And getting madder. Then one day toward the middle of October I strolled into the Valhalla to find him sitting at the fountain playing dominoes with Hamurabi. There was an empty wine jug on the fountain.

Hamurabi was an Egyptian and some kind of a dentist, though he didn't do much business as the people hereabouts

have unusually strong teeth, due to an element in the water. He spent a great deal of his time loafing around the Valhalla and was my uncle's chief buddy. He was a handsome figure of a man, this Hamurabi, being dark-skinned and nearly seven feet tall. He had no foreign accent whatsoever, and it was always my opinion that he wasn't any more Egyptian than the man in the moon.

When Mr. Marshall saw me, he picked up the jug and said, "Now we shall see!" And with that disappeared out into the afternoon.

"Where's he off to?" I asked.

"Ah," was all Hamurabi would say. He liked to devil me.

A half hour passed before my uncle returned. He was stooped and grunting under the load he carried. He set the jug atop the fountain and stepped back, smiling and rubbing his hands together. "Well, what do you think?"

"Ah," purred Hamurabi.

"Gee . . ." I said.

It was the same jug, but there was a wonderful difference; for now it was crammed to the brim with nickels and dimes that shone dully through the thick glass.

"Pretty, eh?" said my uncle. "Had it done over at the First National. Couldn't get in anything bigger-sized than a nickel. Still, there's lotsa money in there, let me tell you."

"But what's the point, Mr. Marshall?"

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I asked. "I mean, what's the idea?"

Mr. Marshall's smile deepened to a grin. "This here's a jug of silver, you might say. . . ."

"The pot at the end of the rainbow," interrupted Hamurabi.

"... and the idea, as you call it, is for folks to guess how much money is in there. For instance, say you buy a quarter's worth of stuff—well, then you get to take a guess. The more you buy, the more guesses you get. And I'll keep all guesses in a ledger ... till Christmas Eve, at which time whoever comes closest to the right amount will get the whole shebang."

It was surprising, really like a miracle, how Wachata County took to the jug. Why, the Valhalla hadn't done so much business since Station Master Tully, poor soul, went stark raving mad and claimed to have discovered oil back of the depot, causing the town to be overrun with wildcat prospectors.

"I'll tell you why all this is," said Hamurabi. "It's not for the reason you may imagine; not, in other words, avidity. No. It's the mystery that's enchanting. Now you look at those nickels and dimes and what do you think: ah, so much! No, no. You think: ah, *how* much? And that's a profound question, indeed. It can mean different things to different people. Understand?"

And oh, was Rufus McPherson wild! When you're in trade you count on Christmas to make up a large share of your yearly profit, and he was hard pressed to find a customer. So he tried to imitate the jug; but being such a stingy man he filled his with pennies. You can imagine what kind of laughing stock he was. Nobody had anything for McPherson but scorn. And so by the middle of November he just stood on the sidewalk outside his store and gazed bitterly at the festivities across the square.

At about this time Applesseed and sister made their first appearance.

He was a stranger in town. At least, no one could recall ever having seen him before. He said he lived on a farm a mile past Indian Branches; told us his mother weighed only 74 pounds and that he had an older brother who would play the fiddle at anybody's wedding for 50 cents. He claimed that Applesseed was the only name he had and that he was twelve years old. But his sister, Middy, said he was eight. His hair was straight and yellow. He had a tight, weather-tanned little face with anxious green eyes that had a very wise and knowing look. He was small and puny and highstrung; and he wore always

the same outfit—a red sweater, blue denim britches and a pair of man-sized boots that went clomp-clomp with every step.

It was raining that first time he came into the Valhalla; his hair was plastered round his head like a cap and his boots were caked with red mud from the country roads. Middy trailed behind him as he swaggered like a cowboy up to the fountain where I was wiping some glasses.

"I hear tell you folks got a bottle fulla money you fixin' to give 'way," he said, looking me square in the eye. "Seem' as you-all are givin' it away, we'd be obliged iffen you'd give it to us. Name's Applesseed, and this here's my sister, Middy."

Middy was a sad, sad-looking kid. She was a good bit taller and older-looking than her brother, a regular bean pole. She had tow-colored hair that was chopped short and a pale, pitiful face. She wore a faded cotton dress that came way up above her bony knees. There was something wrong with her teeth, and she tried to conceal this by keeping her lips primly pursed like an old lady.

"Sorry," I said, "but you'll have to talk with Mr. Marshall."

So sure enough he did. I could hear my uncle explaining what he would have to do to win the jug. Applesseed listened attentively, nodding now and then. Presently he came back and stood in front of the jug and touching it lightly with his hand, said, "Ain't it a pretty thing, Middy?"

Middy said, "Is they gonna give it to us?"

"Naw. What you gotta do, you gotta guess how much money's inside there."

## About the Author . . .

At fifteen, Truman Capote (pronounced as Kah-poh-tee) was tap-dancing on a Mississippi excursion boat. Other adventures include a brief period as the assistant of a Southern fortune-teller and a one-day stint as accountant on the staff of the *New Yorker* magazine. (He was transferred to the art department when he blandly confessed that he couldn't subtract.) Born near New Orleans in 1924, Mr. Capote attended six different schools in five different parts of the country. Of these, Greenwich (Conn.) High School remembers him more for his prankish ways than for his scholarship. He has been writing most of his life. His stories were first published in *Mademoiselle*. Two have been reprinted in the 1946 and 1948 editions of the *O. Henry Prize Stories*. They were collected in 1949 in *A Tree of Night*. His first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, was a best seller.

And you gotta buy two-bits' worth so's even to get a guess."

"Hyh, we ain't got no two bits. Where you 'spec we gonna get us two bits?"

Applesseed frowned and rubbed his chin. "That'll be the easy part, just leave it to me. The only worrisome thing is: I can't just take a chance and guess . . . I gotta know."

WELL, a few days later they showed up again. Applesseed perched on a stool at the fountain and boldly asked for two glasses of water, one for him and one for Middy. It was on this occasion that he gave out the information about his family: "... then there's Papa Daddy—that's my Mama's Papa, who's a Cajun, an' on accounta that he don't speak English good. My brother plays the fiddle . . ."

Middy, lingering in the background, said nervously, "You oughtn't to be tellin' our personal private family business thataway, Applesseed."

"Hush now, Middy," he said, and she hushed. "She's a good little gal," he added, turning to pat her head, "but you can't let her get away with much. You go look at the picture books, honey, and stop frettin' with your teeth. Applesseed here's got some figurin' to do."

This figuring meant staring hard at the jug, as if his eyes were trying to eat it up. With his chin cupped in his hand, he studied it for a long period, not batting his eyelids once. "A lady in Louisiana told me I could see things other folks couldn't see 'cause I was born with a caul on my head," he said.

"It's a cinch you aren't going to see how much there is," I told him. "Why don't you just let a number pop into your head, and maybe that'll be the right one."

"Uh, uh," he said, "too darn risky. Me, I can't take no such chance. Now, the way I got it figured, there ain't but one sure-fire thing and that's to count every nickel and dime."

"Count!"

"Count what?" asked Hamurabi, who had just moyeyed inside and was settling himself at the fountain.

"This kid says he's going to count how much is in the jug," I explained.

Hamurabi looked at Applesseed with interest. "How do you plan to do that, son?"

"Oh, by countin'," said Applesseed matter-of-factly.

Hamurabi laughed. "You better have X-ray eyes, son, that's all I can say."

"Oh, no. All you gotta do is be born with a caul on your head. A lady in Louisiana told me so. She was a witch;

she loved me and when my ma wouldn't give me to her she put a hex on her and now my ma don't weigh but 74 pounds."

"Ve-ry in-ter-esting," was Hamurabi's comment as he gave Applesseed a queer glance.

Middy sauntered up, clutching a copy of *Screen Secrets*. She pointed out a certain photo to Applesseed and said, "Ain't she the nicest-lookin' lady? Now you see, Applesseed, you see how pretty her teeth are? Not a one outa joint."

"Well, don't you fret none," he said.

After they left, Hamurabi ordered a bottle of orangeade and drank it slowly. "Do you think maybe that kid's okay upstairs?" he asked presently in a puzzled voice.

**S**MALL towns are best for spending Christmas, I think. They catch the mood quicker and change and come alive under its spell. By the first week in December house doors were decorated with wreaths, and store windows were flashy with red paper bells and snowflakes of glittering isinglass. The kids hiked out into the woods and came back dragging spicy evergreen trees. Already the women were busy baking fruitcakes, unsealing jars of mincemeat and opening bottles of blackberry and scuppernong wine. In the courthouse square a huge tree was trimmed with silver tinsel and colored electric bulbs that were lighted up at sunset. Late of an afternoon you could hear the choir in the Presbyterian church practicing carols for their annual pageant. All over town the japonicas were in full bloom.

The only person who appeared not the least touched by this heartwarming atmosphere was Applesseed. He went about his declared business of counting the jug-money with great, persistent care. Every day now he came to the Valhalla and concentrated on the jug, scowling and mumbling to himself. At first we were all fascinated, but after a while it got tiresome and nobody paid him any mind whatsoever. He never bought anything, apparently having never been able to raise the two bits. Sometimes he'd talk to Hamurabi, who had taken a tender interest in him and occasionally stood treat to a jawbreaker or a penny's worth of licorice.

"Do you still think he's crazy?" I asked.

"I'm not so sure," said Hamurabi. "But I'll let you know he doesn't eat enough. I'm going to take him over to the Rainbow Cafe and buy him a plate of barbecue."

"He'd appreciate it more if you'd give him a quarter."

"No. A dish of barbecue is what he

needs. Besides, it would be better if he never was to make a guess. A high-strung kid like that, so unusual, I wouldn't want to be the one responsible if he lost. Say, it would be pitiful."

I'll admit that at the time Applesseed struck me as being just funny. Mr. Marshall felt sorry for him, and the kids tried to tease him, but had to give it up when he refused to respond. There you could see him plain as day sitting at the fountain with his forehead puckered and his eyes fixed forever on that jug. Yet he was so withdrawn you sometimes had this awful creepy feeling that, well, maybe he didn't exist. And when you were pretty much convinced of this he'd wake up and say something like, "You know, I hope a 1913 buffalo nickel's in there. A fella was tellin' me he saw where a 1913 buffalo nickel's worth 50 dollars." Or, "Middy's gonna be a big lady in the picture shows. They make lotsa money, the ladies in the picture shows do, and then we ain't gonna never eat another collard green as long as we live. Only Middy says she can't be in the picture shows 'less her teeth look good."

Middy didn't always tag along with her brother. On those occasions when she didn't come, Applesseed wasn't himself; he acted shy and left soon.

Hamurabi kept his promise and stood treat to a dish of barbecue at the cafe. "Mister Hamurabi's nice all right," said Applesseed afterward, "but he's got peculiar notions. Has a notion that if he lived in this place named Egypt he'd be a king or somethin'."

And Hamurabi said, "That kid has the most touching faith. It's a beautiful thing to see. But I'm beginning to despise the whole business." He gestured toward the jug. "Hope of this kind is a cruel thing to give anybody, and I'm sorry I was ever a party to it."

Around the Valhalla the most popular pastime was deciding what you would buy if you won the jug. Among those who participated were Solomon Katz, Phoebe Jones, Curt Kuhnhardt, Puly Simmons, Addie Foxcroft, Marvin Finkle, Trudy Edwards, and Erskine Washington. And these were some of their answers: a trip to and a permanent wave in Birmingham, a second-hand piano, a Shetland pony, a gold bracelet, a set of Rover Boys books and a life insurance policy.

Once Mr. Marshall asked Applesseed what he would get. "It's a secret," was the reply, and no amount of prying could make him tell. We took it for granted that whatever it was, he wanted it real bad.

Honest winter, as a rule, doesn't settle on our part of the country till late Janu-

ary, and then is mild, lasting only a short time. But in the year of which I write we were blessed with a singular cold spell the week before Christmas. Some still talk of it, for it was so terrible; water pipes froze solid; many folks had to spend the days in bed snuggled under their quilts, having neglected to lay in enough kindling for the fireplace; the sky turned that strange dull gray as it does just before a storm, and the sun was pale as a waning moon. There was a sharp wind; the old dried-up leaves of last fall fell on the icy ground, and the evergreen tree in the courthouse square was twice stripped of its Christmas finery. When you breathed, your breath made smoky clouds. Down by the silk mill where the very poor people lived, the families huddled together in the dark at night and told tales to keep their minds off the cold. Out in the country the farmers covered their delicate plants with gunny sacks and prayed; some took advantage of the weather to slaughter their hogs and bring the fresh sausage to town.

Mr. R. C. Judkins outfitted himself in a red cheesecloth suit and played Santa Claus at the five 'n' dime. Mr. R. C. Judkins was the father of a big family, so everybody was happy to see him earn a dollar. There were several church socials, at one of which Mr. Marshall came face to face with Rufus McPherson. Bitter words were passed, but not a blow was struck.

Now, as has been mentioned, Applesseed lived on a farm a mile below Indian Branches; this would be approximately three miles from town; a mighty long and lonesome walk. Still, despite the cold, he came every day to the Valhalla and stayed till closing time which, as the days had grown short, was after nightfall. Once in a while he'd catch a ride part way home with the foreman from the silk mill, but not often. He looked tired, and there were worry lines about his mouth. He was always cold and shivered a lot. I don't think he wore any warm drawers underneath his red sweater and blue britches.

**I**T was three days before Christmas when out of the clear sky, he announced, "Well, I'm finished. I mean I know how much is in the bottle." He claimed this with such grave, solemn sureness it was hard to doubt him.

"Why, say now, son, hold on," said Hamurabi, who was present. "You can't know anything of the sort. It's wrong to think so; you're just heading to get yourself hurt."

"You don't need to preach to me, Mr. Hamurabi. I know what I'm up to. A



lady in Louisiana, she told me . . ."

"Yes, yes, yes . . . but you got to forget that. If it were me, I'd go home and stay put and forget about this jug."

"My brother's gonna play the fiddle at a wedding over in Cherokee City tonight, and he's gonna give me the two bits," said Applesseed stubbornly. "Tomorrow I'll take my chance."

So the next day I felt kind of excited when Applesseed and Middy arrived. Sure enough, he had his quarter; it was tied for safekeeping in the corner of a red bandanna.

The two of them wandered hand in hand among the showcases, holding a whispery consultation as to what to purchase. They decided finally on a thimble-sized bottle of gardenia cologne which Middy promptly opened and partly emptied on her hair. "It smells like . . . oh, I ain't never smelled nothin' as sweet. Here, Applesseed, honey, let me douse some on your hair." But he wouldn't let her.

Mr. Marshall got out the ledger in which he kept his records, while Apple-

seed strolled over to the fountain and cupped the jug between his hands, stroking it gently. His eyes were bright and his cheeks flushed from excitement. Several persons who were in the drug-store at that moment crowded close. Middy stood in the background quietly scratching her leg and smelling the cologne. Hamurabi wasn't there.

Mr. Marshall licked the point of his pencil and smiled. "Okay, son, what do you say?"

Applesseed took a deep breath. "Seventy-seven dollars and thirty-five cents," he blurted.

In picking such an uneven sum he showed originality, for the run-of-the-mill guess was a plain round figure. Mr. Marshall repeated the amount solemnly as he copied it down.

"When'll I know if I won?"

"Christmas Eve," someone said.

"That's tomorrow, huh?"

"Why, so it is," said Mr. Marshall, not surprised. "Come at four o'clock."

During the night the thermometer dropped even lower, and toward dawn

there was one of those swift, summer-like rainstorms, so that the following day was bright and frozen. The town was like a picture postcard of a northern scene, what with icicles sparkling whitely on the trees and frost flowers coating all windowpanes. Mr. R. C. Judkins rose early and, for no clear reason, tramped the streets ringing a supper bell. As the day was windless, smoke climbed lazily from various chimneys straightway to the still, frozen sky. By midmorning, the Presbyterian choir was in full swing and the town kids (wearing horror masks, as at Halloween) were chasing one another round and round the square, kicking up an awful fuss.

Hamurabi dropped by at noon to help us fix up the Valhalla. He brought along a fat sack of Satsumas, and together we ate every last one, tossing the hulls into a newly installed pot-bellied stove (a present from Mr. Marshall to himself) which stood in the middle of the room. Then my uncle took the jug off the fountain, polished and placed it on a prominently situated table. He was no help after that whatsoever, for he squatted in a chair and spent his time tying and retying a tacky green ribbon around the jug. So Hamurabi and I had the rest to do alone; we swept the floor and washed the mirrors and dusted the cabinets and strung streamers of red and green crepe paper from wall to wall. When we were finished, it looked very fine and elegant.

But Hamurabi gazed sadly at our work, and said, "Well, I think I better be getting along now."

"Aren't you going to stay?" asked Mr. Marshall, shocked.

"No, oh no," said Hamurabi, shaking

his head slowly. "I don't want to see that kid's face. This is Christmas and I mean to have a rip-roaring time. And I couldn't, not with something like that on my conscience. I wouldn't sleep."

"Suit yourself," said Mr. Marshall. And he shrugged, but you could see he was really hurt. "Life's like that . . . and besides, who knows, he might win."

Hamurabi sighed gloomily. "What's his guess?"

"Seventy-seven dollars and thirty-five cents," I said.

"Now I ask you, isn't that fantastic?" said Hamurabi. He slumped in a chair next to Mr. Marshall and crossed his legs. "If you got any Baby Ruths, I think I'd like one; my mouth tastes sour."

AS the afternoon wore on, the three of us sat around the table feeling terribly blue. No one said hardly a word and, as the kids had deserted the square, the only sound was the clock tolling the hour in the courthouse steeple. The Valhalla was closed to business, but people kept passing by and peeking in the window. At three o'clock Mr. Marshall told me to unlock the door.

Within 20 minutes the place was jam full; everyone was wearing his Sunday best, and the air smelled sweet, for most of the little silk-mill girls had scented themselves with vanilla flavoring. They scrunched up against the walls, perched on the fountain, squeezed in wherever they could; soon the crowd had spread to the sidewalk and stretched into the road. The square was lined with team-drawn wagons and Model-T Fords that had carted farmers and their families into town. There was much laughter and shouting and joking—several outraged ladies complained of the rough, shoving ways of the younger men, but nobody left. Everybody was making the best of a good thing; it's usually so quiet around here; nothing much ever happens. It's safe to say that nearly all of Wachata County was present but invalids and Rufus McPherson. I looked around for Applesed but didn't see him anywhere.

Mr. Marshall harumphed, and clapped for attention. When things quieted down and when the atmosphere was properly tense, he raised his voice like an auctioneer, and called: "Now listen, everybody. In this here envelope you see in my hand"—he held a manila envelope above his head—"well, in it's the answer . . . which nobody but the First National Bank knows up to now, ha ha. And in this book"—he held up the ledger with his free hand—"I've got written down what you folks guessed.

Are there any questions?" All was silence. "Fine. Now, if we could have a volunteer. . . ."

Not a living soul budged an inch; it was as if an awful shyness had overcome the crowd, and even those who were ordinarily natural-born show-offs shuffled their feet, ashamed. Then a voice, Applesed's, hollered, "Lemme by . . . outa the way, please, ma'am." Trotting along behind as he pushed forward were Middy and a lanky, sleepy-eyed fellow who was evidently the fiddling brother. Applesed was dressed the same as usual, but his face was scrubbed rosy clean, his boots polished and his hair slicked back skin tight. "Did we get here in time?" he panted.

But Mr. Marshall said, "So you want to be our volunteer?"

Applesed looked bewildered, then nodded vigorously.

"Does anybody have an objection to this young man?"

Still there was dead quiet. Mr. Marshall handed the envelope to Applesed who accepted it calmly. He chewed his underlip while studying it a moment before ripping the flap.

In all that congregation there was no sound except an occasional cough and the soft tinkling of Mr. R. C. Judkins' supper bell. Hamurabi was leaning against the fountain, staring up at the ceiling. Middy was gazing blankly over her brother's shoulder, and when he started to tear open the envelope she let out a pained little gasp.

Applesed withdrew a slip of pink paper and holding it as though it was very fragile, muttered to himself whatever was written there. Suddenly his face paled and tears glistened in his eyes.

"Hey, speak up, boy," someone hollered.

Hamurabi stepped forward and all but snatched the slip away. He cleared his throat and commenced to read when his expression changed most comically. "Well, . . ." he said.

"Louder! Louder!" an angry chorus demanded.

"Buncha crooks!" yelled Mr. R. C. Judkins. "I smell a rat and he smells to high heaven!" Whereupon a cyclone of catcalls and whistling rent the air.

"Citizens," cried Mayor Mawes, "citizens—I say, this is Christmas . . . I say. . . ."

And Mr. Marshall hopped up on a chair and clapped and stamped till a minimum of order was restored. It might as well be noted here that we later found out Rufus McPherson had paid Mr. R. C. Judkins to start the rumpus. Anyway, when the outbreak was quelled, who should be in possession

of the slip but me . . . don't ask how.

Without thinking, I shouted, "Seventy-seven dollars and thirty-five cents." Naturally, due to the excitement, I didn't at first catch the meaning; it was just a number. Then Applesed's brother let forth with his whooping yell, and so I understood. The name of the winner spread quickly, and the awed, murmuring whispers were like a rainstorm.

Oh, Applesed himself was a sorry sight; he was crying as though he was mortally wounded, but when Hamurabi lifted him onto his shoulders so the crowd could get a gander, he dried his eyes with the cuffs of his sweater and began grinning. Mr. R. C. Judkins yelled, "Gyp! Gyp!" but was drowned out by a deafening round of applause.

Middy grabbed my arm. "My teeth," she squealed. "Now I'm gonna get my teeth."

"Teeth?" I said, kind of dazed.

"The false kind," says she. "That's what we're gonna get us with the money—a lovely set of white false teeth."

But at that moment my sole interest was in how Applesed had known. "Hey, tell me," I said desperately, "tell me, how did you know there was just exactly seventy-seven dollars and thirty-five cents?"

Middy gave me this look. "Why I thought he told you," she said real serious. "He counted."

"Yes, but how . . . how?"

"Gee, don't you even know how to count?"

"But is that all he did?"

"Well," she said, following a thoughtful pause, "he did do a little praying, too." She started to dart off, then turned back and called, "Besides, he was born with a caul on his head."

AND that's the nearest anybody ever came to solving the mystery. Thereafter, if you were to ask Applesed "how come?" he would smile strangely and change the subject. Many years later he and his family moved to somewhere in Florida and were never heard from again.

But in our town his legend flourishes still and, till his death a year ago last April, Mr. Marshall was invited each Christmas Day to tell the story of Applesed to the Baptist Bible class. Hamurabi once typed up an account and mailed it around to various magazines; it was never printed; one editor wrote back and said that, "If the little girl really turned out to be a movie star, then there might be something to your story." But that's not what happened, so why should you lie?



THAT Christmas the weather was mild over much of western Europe; the rain swished in the gutters of the streets and made shining rings under the gaslights. In the little English mining town where I was born people trimmed their Christmas trees and festooned their rooms with colored streamers and thronged the shops to buy presents. There was a cozy old-fashioned happiness in the air.

It was indeed (with all its faults) a cozy, fairly happy world. The word commercial was still an adjective, and many had not yet seen their first aeroplane or spoken into a telephone. But you could take a train or boat from London and go wandering anywhere you liked (except Russia and Turkey) without passports, visas, treasury permits, cards of identification, and all the personal dossier the modern traveler must carry. All you needed was money to jingle, and money was money then—in any currency you could name. Nor had the world yet counted its freedoms, but took them all for granted, including the freedom to starve. For it was a hard world too. Children in the city slums went barefoot and break-fast to school; the homeless shivered on the public seats on London's Thames Embankment from night to dawn.

Still, though, this year I am talking about had been a pretty good one; industry had prospered, and most homes in the town where I was born were troves of plenty. For the Christmas clubs had just paid off, and the shops were stocked with turkeys and hams and cheeses and fruits and cakes and candy and confectionery. An English

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#### About the Author . . .



English novelist James Hilton turned out his fabulously successful *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* in exactly four days. Written in 1933 for the Christmas supplement of the *British Weekly*, the novelette made an immediate hit in

this country when it first appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. It later became a book, a play, and inevitably, a movie. Other novels, written in the author's smooth and polished style, have shone both between covers and on the screen. Of these the best known are *Lost Horizon* and *Random Harvest*.



#### By JAMES HILTON

shilling would buy you the best meal in the town's only restaurant. But people in those days ate at home, and there was no maid's night out because there were no maids, and if there had been maids, they wouldn't have had a night out, and if they had had a night out it wouldn't have occurred to the lady of the house that she couldn't cook her own dinner for once. It was that sort of town.

I was a boy of thirteen then, home for the school holidays, and my father, who was a schoolmaster at a different school and also had holidays, took me for long walks on the moors beyond the town. He liked to talk about Education and My Future. That makes him sound pompous, but actually he wasn't; he was just interested in his job, and a believer in it, and anxious that I should follow in his footsteps, only a bit higher—say to the altitude of college professor. So the time crept towards Christmas and as the great day approached, uncles and aunts and cousins would arrive from other towns for the annual family gathering, with much impromptu confusion of putting an extra bed here or there, or having some of the children stay with a neighbor who happened to possess a spare room. For we were that sort of family and had that sort of neighbors.

Then came the Morning of Mornings, with wakefulness before dawn and the impossibility of going to sleep again, and all the later excitement of exploring stockings and unwrapping presents. Of course we kept up the Santa Claus ritual, because by the time you grew too old to believe in it, you were old enough to get an equal pleasure from sharing an adult conspiracy to fool the younger ones. And besides, it was half-satisfying to conform, even without belief.

Soon after breakfast we all trooped to church, my father in a frock coat and top hat, as befitted his official position as organist. He also wore removable linen cuffs, very starched and stiff, which he always complained got in the way of his playing, though never did he conceive the really revolutionary idea of discarding them. He was a good organist and many would stay behind after the service to sit through his closing voluntary. He could see the size of his audience through a little mirror above the three-manual instrument, but what he did not realize was that from the first few pews his own face could be seen in the same mirror, beaming all the time in very harmless pride. If the audience were large enough (say fifty or sixty) he would pull out all those stops that have the magnificent names

—the Ophicleide, the Solo Tubas, and for a grand finale the Full Great and the Pedal Bombarads.

We had Christmas dinner at my grandmother's house late in the day—with the family table stretched to the walls and everyone a little cramped against his neighbor. Tremendous helpings of turkey, plum pudding, pie, and a ceremonial glass of port for the grownups over the nuts and muscatels. Carol-singers—neighbors' children—stood outside the windows and sang "While Shepherds Watched," collected pennies, and scampered off to the next house. And we talked—politics, if Uncle Joe got going (for he had once stood for Councillor), but more often just family stuff, so-and-so's new house, and how Lizzie's Tom was doing at the bank, and whether William's sciatica had been quite as bad as the winter before. Marriages, of course, were often discussed—what she could really see in him, and whether he was good enough for her—that kind of thing.

New Year's Day in our part of England was almost as important as Christmas, so that between the two there came a hiatus marked by overstuffed stomachs, left-over turkey served in every possible form, shops that were open but sold hardly anything, and newspapers devoid of news. Nothing ever seemed to happen during that strange interlude. But New Year, and especially the actual passing at midnight, was a terrific climax which to us youngsters was full of enchantment—for did it not mean that we were one year older, and therefore one year better off? The Watch Night service was always crowded (much more so than any of the Christmas services), and here again my father functioned, timing his best effects for the absolute moment and therefore watching the clock as carefully as a present-day radio announcer. Afterwards we all hung around the churchyard gossiping and shaking hands with even slight acquaintances, then strolled back through the echoing streets to a huge meal of meat pies, cold ham and tongue, potato cakes, and tea. No wonder New Year's Day had to be a holiday!

That year, I remember, there was a New Year's Eve of starlight and bracing wind from the moors; a lovely night, ripe to engender an optimism just as

# PEDAL



bracing. And some of us who were not really superstitious remarked that it was just as well that the Old Year was finished—after all, it hadn't been so bad, but still, you know, Nineteen-THIRTEEN . . . The New Year would doubtless be much safer. . . .

They say that in the year Nine Hundred and Ninety-Nine millions of good folk throughout Europe believed that the end of the world was at hand—so impressed were they by the mystical value of round numbers. And as that year drew to a close some even sold their property, either to give to the church or to buy for themselves one final fling of pleasure.

We in 1913 did not believe in the efficacy of numbers, and even our superstitions had not been more than lightly cherished. Yet in truth our world was coming to an end that year, and we never guessed it.

The next year Christmas and New Year celebrations were vastly different. And a strange thing happened—perhaps one of the strangest in all history. On the European continent, where the massed armies of millions had dug trenches from Flanders to the Swiss border, and where the slaughter of those opening months of the first world war had already settled into a dull and dreadful misery, Christmas came like a moment of waking amidst the horror of a nightmare. Men on both sides suddenly realized that even No Man's Land was the soil of what had been called Christendom, and with almost one accord in many sections of the line they sprang out of their dirt-holes and made merry amongst the barbed wire, exchanging food and drink and singing Holy Night and Heilige Nacht together. This sort of thing, for which no rules had been made in the plans of the General Staffs, went on for hours, with men throwing aside their rifles and shooting nothing but Very lights to illumine the revels; and who knows what might have come to pass eventually had not some stickler for discipline on one side or the other (it was never determined which) fired the gun that broke the dream and sent innocents scurrying back to reality!

Destiny held them. For the old world was really gone by then, gone beyond any recall, and the new world . . . who shall say that it has even yet been born?



# BOMBARD

*The author recalls a chapter in his boyhood—*

*an unforgettable Christmas in an English mining town*

## ABOUT CARL SANDBURG

POET, biographer, novelist, story-teller, and singer of folk songs, Carl Sandburg is as earthy as the sun-baked plains of his native Illinois. Back in 1915 certain poetry lovers were shocked when Sandburg described Chicago as the "hog-butcher of the world."

More than almost any other major American poet, Carl Sandburg has written of and for the people, rather than for a select audience. If his language at times borrows from the idiom of the hoboes and farmers and the tall tales of mining camps, it is because Sandburg has known this kind of talk first hand and feels that it reflects the meaning of life in these United States.

Sandburg, the son of Swedish immigrants, was born in Galesburg, Ill., in 1878. As a boy, he drove a milk wagon, worked in a barber shop, as a scene-shifter, and as a truck driver. He went to school irregularly, but read a lot, mostly folk tales and biography. He was fascinated by the yarns told at the corner store about another Illinois boy—Abe Lincoln. This interest later flowered into the four-volume biography of Lincoln for which he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1940.

At the age of 17 Sandburg headed west, riding freight trains and working in wheat fields. Two years later he returned to Galesburg to work his way through Lombard College, where he first began writing poetry.

At Lombard, Sandburg attracted the attention of one of his professors, who not only encouraged his writing but paid for the publication of Sandburg's first volume of poetry. After graduation Sandburg worked as a newspaperman in Milwaukee. Here he married Lillian Steichen, sister of the famous American photographer, Edward Steichen. Then he moved to Chicago, where he wrote editorials for the *Chicago Daily News*. But he continued to work on his poems.

Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* was published in 1915, and *Corn Huskers*, *Smoke and Steel*, and *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* followed. These were tough, vivid poems about the men who worked in fields and factories, their daily toil and their aspirations. These themes and the new language Sandburg was forging out of American speech culminated in *The People*, Yes in 1936. Poetry judges in the annual Scholastic Writing Awards report that Sandburg, along with Walt Whitman, has most influenced the work of today's aspiring poets.

While Sandburg commonly speaks in "the tongues of men," he can also approach the speech of angels in the lyric grace of some of his poems. In a poem which appears in Harcourt, Brace's new collection of his poetry, Sandburg tells us to be careful when we talk with words, for "words are made of syllables" and "syllables . . . are made of air—and air is so thin—air is the breath of God—air is finer than fire or mist, finer than water or moonlight . . ."

The new Sandburg volume, from which we reprint the poems on these pages, presents not only the poetry which has made Sandburg's reputation, but also a section of poems not previously collected. Some of the new poems show traces of the homespun humor of the earlier Sandburg; others are lyric hymns to the beauties of nature; many, such as "Storms Begin Way Back," sound deep beneath the surface of the troubled contemporary world.

Many Americans who were not great poetry readers came to know Sandburg when he began traveling around the country, reading his poems and singing the folk songs he has picked up in his ramblings. Sandburg's favorite ballads have been published in a volume entitled *American Songbag*.

# New Poems

by

Carl Sandburg

## Glass House Canticle

Bless Thee, O Lord, for the living arc of the sky over me  
this morning.

Bless Thee, O Lord, for the companionship of night mist  
far above the skyscraper peaks I saw when I woke  
once during the night.

Bless Thee, O Lord, for the miracle of light to my eyes and  
the mystery of it ever changing.

Bless Thee, O Lord, for the laws Thou hast ordained hold-  
ing fast these tall oblongs of stone and steel, holding  
fast the planet Earth in its course and farther beyond  
the cycle of the Sun

## Special Starlight

The Creator of night and of birth  
was the Maker of the stars.

Shall we look up now at stars in Winter  
And call them always sweeter friends  
Because this story of a Mother and a Child  
Never is told with the stars left out?

Is it a Holy Night now when a child issues  
Out of the dark and the unknown  
Into the starlight?

Down a Winter evening sky  
when a woman hovers  
between two great doorways  
between entry and exit,  
between pain to be laughed at,  
joy to be wept over—  
do the silver-white lines  
then come from holy stars?  
shall the Newcomer, the Newborn,  
be given soft flannels,  
swaddling-cloths called Holy?



Shall all wanderers over the earth, all homeless ones,  
All against whom doors are shut and words spoken—  
Shall these find the earth less strange tonight?  
Shall they hear news, a whisper on the night wind?  
"A Child is born." "The meek shall inherit the earth."

"And they crucified Him . . . they spat upon Him,  
And He rose from the dead."

Shall a quiet dome of stars high over  
Make signs and a friendly language  
Among all nations?

Shall they yet gather with no clenched fists at all,  
And look into each other's faces and see eye to eye,  
And find ever new testaments of man as a sojourner  
And a toiler and a brother of fresh understandings?

Shall there be now always  
believers and more believers  
of sunset and moonrise,  
of moonset and dawn,  
of wheeling numbers of stars,  
and wheels within wheels?

Shall plain habitations off the well-known roads  
Count now for a little more than they used to?

Shall plain ways and people held close to earth  
Be reckoned among things to be written about?  
Shall tumult, grandeur, fanfare, panoply, prepared loud  
noises

Stand equal to a quiet heart, thoughts, vast dreams  
Of men conquering the earth by conquering themselves?  
Is there a time for ancient genius of man  
To be set for comparison with the latest generations?  
Is there a time for stripping to simple, childish questions?

On a Holy Night we may say:  
The Creator of night and of birth  
was the Maker of the stars.

### **Storms Begin Far Back**

Storms begin far back.

You can't have a storm offhand  
like somebody took a notion and  
decided a storm would be right  
handy to come off now and here.

The moan and lash of the winds  
came out of a place nice for  
them, nice for their growing.

The anger of the waters lay  
breeding, spawning, pent up  
and ready to go.

The blaze of the prongs  
the zigzags of forked fire,  
they had a long seed-time  
in a womb of unborn flame

before they went to town  
and came howling, "You don't  
know what goes on here but  
we'll tell you."

This storm now didn't come out of nowhere  
—it had a starting place, a home and womb  
—far back it began, brother, sister,  
—far back, sweetheart.

### **Moments of Dawn Riders**

Those who straddle foaming sea-horses and ride into the  
sunrise

do so with no instrument board, no time-tables.

Those who watch one rainbow after another dissolve in  
seven prisms

they seem to gather reputations for being rainbow chasers—  
they also choose bright mornings of clear weather and fading  
daystars

to study the organization of the sprockets of the bursting  
dawn.

They go out of their way to contemplate either a forty-  
eight-hour blizzard

or a short light snowfall and the bigger the flakes the  
shorter—

and the slow shadows of a summer moondown they  
wouldn't try to make over

nor any significant bushels of potatoes nor baskets of corn  
running over

nor poignant orchids ready to perish at a wrong breath or  
accent

nor any single scarlet moss-rose piteous in a wild rain-  
drench

nor a boy of brown hair and eyes at Saipan, "It's hard to  
go,"

nor a blue-eyed boy at Arnhem with a wry smile, "Good-by  
chum this is it."

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**W**AY BACK in the late twenties at the Haymarket Theatre in London I was rehearsing a play which was called *Mr. Pickwick*, founded on Charles Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*. We were rehearsing the famous Christmas scene at Dingley Dell farm—the scene of the mistletoe and the wassail and the old lady and the fat boy and the blazing log fire and the dancing—and I found that I and it were dull and spiritless.

Over the week end I went to visit my home town, and during the train ride to Scarborough and back I reread Dickens's book, and the language jiggled and swirled and was breathless and peaceful by turns, and I remember thinking, even that long ago, that Dickens's text was complete of itself and that the mistake of our play was that it could not be transferred to any other medium without taking away its excitement. And I remember thinking then that I would like to work on this passage and read it aloud many times so that I could convey to people what Dickens's text did to me.

About that time, too, I had a beautiful little book of Hans Andersen's story "The Nightingale," (it had illustrations by Edmund Dulac, and I have never been able to find the edition since) and I remember thinking that I would like to spend months learning how to tell that story to large numbers of people as if I were the author inventing the story for the first time. I knew very clearly that it would be a long, hard process. I knew that the smallest part of the labor would be the learning of these stories by heart.

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I met Norman Corwin. My wife, Elsa Lanchester, and I did two shows with him on a program which he had in New York then, "The Pursuit of Happiness." One program was a condensation of Stephen Vincent Benét's *John Brown's Body*; the other was extracts from the work of Thomas Wolfe. Again with Norman I did a program of Sandburg, one of Wolfe, one of Walt Whitman; and I found the old ambition raging.

During the recent war I was in Hollywood. I was not actively in the war and I was restless. I had a heavy contract at a movie studio, and apparently I was behaving badly around the house. Elsa, who understands me only too well, said, "You're an out-of-work man and a nuisance around the house; get out of here and work." I was angry—very angry—but as usual, after two or three days I knew she was right. I was being paid a lot of money, but movie acting is no complete job. In a year it will absorb only four to five months of your time, and a tenth of a man's energy. I was in a still department one day, up at Universal, I think. There were two wounded men from Birmingham Hospital, and I asked what the fellows did of an evening. They said, "Nothing," and I asked them if they would be interested in anybody's coming and reading to them a couple of times a week for two hours or so. They said they would, so I had a full occupation.

I read Dickens, Aesop, Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, Maupassant, James Thurber, Hans Andersen, Washington Irving, and what all. One day I picked up a Bible, and they protested. They did not want to hear anything from a dull book. The Bible was not dull to me, but I had to prove to them that it was not dull to me, and I used every trick that I had learned and they liked it and asked for more. We had a pleasant time. There is something about reading aloud to a group of people, however scarred, that turns them into children. They would sit and listen to fairy stories. They found a reflection of their sufferings, which they had thought to be unique, in the tragedies of Shakespeare, and felt better. I lost my actor's nerves. I taught dozens of them how to read aloud to their wives and children. The whole affair is one of the good memories of my life.

One evening when I went home to Elsa I said that I believed people want this thing that I am doing; we are all disturbed and unsettled, and they seem to like sitting down and hearing about the same things that have happened to people in the past which have been set down by great writers. I found that they all had—contrary to what I had been told in the entertainment industry—a common, shy hunger for knowledge. I found that when I went home after one of these sessions I slept like a log—I am

# Storytelling

by Charles Laughton



not normally a sound sleeper. I then began to read about reading aloud. I read of two famous tours of Charles Dickens; of Fanny Kemble and of the Chautauqua circuit; and learned that I had invented nothing, but was carrying on an American tradition.

It is a friendly thing to read from great books to large numbers of people. I have always been a nervous actor and scared of appearing before audiences. I have never been scared when I have had a bundle of books under my arm.

I HAVE been asked which of the great authors people seem to like best. I have read to audiences varying in size from several hundred to six thousand or so, and the main impression that I have taken away is that people have just liked hearing things out of real books. Sometimes they have said, "I liked Dickens best" (it may have been snowing outside—it was in Detroit); sometimes James Thurber (they wanted to laugh together); sometimes a Psalm (they wanted to be solemn together); and sometimes Shakespeare's magic wood from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (they were indulging in magic together). There has been no preference. I have been moved by their acceptance of things particularly loved. And that is an interesting thing about people in theatres—doing things together. That is the beauty of being in a theatre. That we all—fifteen hundred or so of us in a big room—do the same thing together at the same moment—laugh or wonder or pity—and we feel good and safe because the people around us are the same as we are.

I have thought about this a lot—what theatre is—and I think this is a good part of what it is. And when we agree, as we mostly do, that a play is a good or a bad play, what we are saying is that it had the truth or it did not have the truth to fuse us then and there. And the communion that happens in a theatre is one of the best things we have in life.

I have been asked about the techniques of reading aloud. I had better tell you something of my experiences in the hospitals when the men came to me and asked me to teach them to read love poems to their wives or Mother Goose stories to their children. They would first of all start by imitating my English accent. I had to get them back to speaking in the accents of the place they came from.

People always speak most beautifully in the accents of their home towns—I, by the way, do not think that standard speech is the most alive speech. Then they would go downtown to some store and make recordings of their voices, and I would have to tell them they had to learn to tell stories or poems to an

## About the Author

Charles Laughton's portrayal of the cruel Captain Bligh in *Mutiny on the Bounty* is widely regarded as one of the most powerful performances in the annals of film-making. Does it seem incongruous that the creator of as malevolent a character as ever stalked the screen should write with such warmth and charm about the gentle art of storytelling?

The wide variety of roles Laughton has played on the stage and screen includes an impressive number of unsavory characters. (Recent examples—the Nazi agent in *The Arch of Triumph* and the publisher in *The Big Clock*.) But his friends explain that Laughton so dislikes the pompous and the cruel that he takes especial pleasure in exposing them on the screen.

Laughton was born in Scarborough, England, in 1899. His parents, who owned the Victoria Hotel in Scarborough, were distressed when at an early age Charles displayed an interest in the theatre. To dampen his ardor, they dispatched him at 16 to London to be trained for the hotel business. Charles took full advantage of London and spent most of his wages seeing plays.

After World War I, Laughton returned to Scarborough and worked at

the hotel business for seven years, but indulged in amateur theatricals on the side. Finally his father, discerning where his son's heart lay, gave in and financed Charles at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. Laughton was an immediate success on the London stage, and between 1926 and 1929 he appeared in 16 plays. It was during this period that he married Elsa Lanchester, who had starred with him in *Mr. Prohack*.

In 1929 he made his debut in films, and his film career has included such memorable performances as Nero in Cecil B. DeMille's *Sign of the Cross*, and the title roles in Alexander Korda's *Henry VIII* (for which he won the 1933 Academy Award) and *Rembrandt*. For his work in *Mutiny on the Bounty*, the New York film critics voted him the outstanding actor of the year, and critic Mark Van Doren wrote: "Laughton's performance as Captain Bligh fixes him in my mind as by far the best of living actors." Laughton's most recent appearance on the screen was as the eccentric French police inspector in *The Man on the Eiffel Tower*.

Laughton and his wife took out their U. S. citizenship papers in 1942 and now live in California.

other person and that if they wanted to learn to read aloud well they must learn to seek the response in somebody else's eyes as they read; and so I would get them reading to each other. After that, it's a question of practice; a lot of practice. There are laws, to obey the rhythms laid down by the poet. The verse of Shakespeare has always made nonsense to me—unless one follows strictly his iambic pentameter: *de-dum de-dum, de-dum, de-dum, de-dum*; but the whole thing is bound up in wanting to communicate something you like to others and have them like it too.

I know that some people could be angry about the remark about standard speech. I know someone who is a friend of mine who may be disappointed that I have made it. Her name is Margaret Pendergast McClean. She is a speech teacher and she has taught our Shakespeare class about the control of our voices.

I KNOW that standard speech is necessary in professional acting; otherwise in great centers such as New York and Chicago no plays could be put together if all the actors were speaking in the several accents of their home towns, but still I would like to hear *Julius Caesar* in Iowa in the speech of the Middle West, which is strong. And *Julius Caesar* in Oregon in the speech of the Far West, and *Julius Caesar* in New Orleans in the soft and lovely speech

of the South. This would not work if your point of view is that *Julius Caesar* is chiefly about ancient Rome, but I think *Julius Caesar* is more about man as a political animal in the town in which it is being played in that year and at that moment. I hope Mrs. McClean will understand this, and will know that we are not ungrateful for what she has so usefully and patiently taught us.

I find myself objecting every time I either say or hear the phrase "reading aloud." Stories were told and retold for hundreds of years before they were set down and these are the best stories, the stories which were told before they were written, and not written before they were read. This is so of the stories in the Bible. As an actor, it is easy for me to understand that they are for the voice. There are places to go loud and places to go soft and places to go fast and places to go slow. And any good actor is likely to go loud and soft and fast and slow in the same places all by himself. That is what I want to be—a storyteller. I would like to be the man who knows all the stories, who has on his back a bag full of stories as bottomless as Santa Claus's bag of toys. But that can never be, because no man could ever know all the stories even if he were to live to be a thousand years old. I shall never even know all the stories in that way that I like best; but it is a good thing to want to go on living longer than possible. It is better than wishing you were dead.



Cathleen Burns, Young Voices Editor

## To Save the World

HERE'S an excitingly different short story that combines science fiction with religious symbolism. Last spring, James Robinson won honors in the Regional Scholastic Writing Awards sponsored by the *Newark* (N. J.) *News* and a fourth prize in the National Scholastic Writing Awards.

"We are dying, My Lord," whispered the voice.

"I know," was the reply. "Halcyon II is dying. Our people are dying."

"We must move, My Lord."

"Bring the maps."

"Yes, My Lord."

The planet of Terra in the system of Sol has a diameter of 8000 miles. It is covered with a blanket of atmosphere consisting of approximately 78 per cent nitrogen and 21 per cent oxygen, with various lesser elements present. The planet revolves in an orbit 93 million miles from Sol and has one satellite, Luna. Terra rotates once a day on its axis and takes 365 days to complete one revolution around Sol. It is fit to support our life.

"Summon the Explorer."

"Yes, My Lord."

"You wished my presence, My Lord?" whispered a new voice.

"You are to survey and make a full report on the planet of Terra in the system of Sol."

"I go immediately, My Lord."

The planet of Terra had revolved around Sol several million times in its present state. It had in that time acquired a mantle of vegetation and living inhabitants. One breed of creature fostered by Terra had outstripped the others in intelligence, and now that creature, known as Man, ruled parts of Terra and had done so for perhaps 10,000 years. At the moment, there existed several empires on Terra, one of them being ruled by a race of man called the Roman.

"Explorer, your report on the planet of Terra."

"The vegetation is much like ours, My Lord. And it is plentiful."

"The culture."

"None to speak of. The humans there are little better than animals, having neither the culture nor science to resist Halcyon, My Lord."

"There is no resistance to the Wave?"

"Never, My Lord."

"The population will board the Liner."

"Yes, My Lord."

On Terra, the Great Roman Empire, in its desire for order and organization, was taking a census of all the inhabitants of its domains. All subjects of Rome were ordered to return to the city of their birth to register for the census. One Joseph of Nazareth, with his young wife, Mary, was journeying from Nazareth to Bethlehem, in the eastern part of the Empire, to register for the census. The road was rough, the weather poor, and Mary was heavy with child.

"Tell me, Old Timer," whispered a young voice. "You were alive when we took Halcyon II. How was a whole planet conquered?"

"It was eight million years ago," whispered the ancient voice, "when we moved from Halcyon I to Halcyon II. I was young then, a gunner on the Liner, just like you are now. There were people living on Halcyon II back then, humans. They were at constant war. I guess they would have wiped themselves out if we hadn't done it for them..."



"How could you kill the inhabitants of a whole planet and not ruin it, Old Timer?"

"Ah," moaned the voice, "I wondered too back then. Now I just wonder why. A high-frequency wave drove the inhabitants mad, deteriorating their thought cells, reducing them to the animals that the Wave doesn't touch."

"How simple," said the young voice. "How utterly simple."

Mary and Joseph arrived at Bethlehem on a cold winter's eve. Mary's condition dictated a place to rest for the night, but there were many people in Bethlehem for the Roman census, and lodging was impossible to find. Finally, one inn-keeper gave the couple permission to sleep in a stable he owned, dug back in a hillside outside of town. That night a boy was born and named Jesus.

"We near Terra, My Lord."

"Prepare the Wave."

An excited voice broke the calm. "My Lord, My Lord!" it cried.

"Speak."

"The Navigator reports a strange body in the heavens. It lies directly between the Liner and Terra."

"The Navigator will steer around it."

"That he has tried, My Lord, but no matter which way he turns, it still lies in front of us."

"The Gunner will disintegrate it."

"That too has been tried. It absorbs our most powerful rays."

"The Navigator will reverse drive."

"It also has been tried, but with negative results. We are destined to collide with this strange star, for that is what it appears to be. Contact with any large body at this speed means complete annihilation, My Lord."

"Yes."

"What shall we do, My Lord?"

"There is nothing to do. Halcyon III is... death."

On a bleak hillside in the area of Palestine in the Roman Empire on Terra, three shepherds lay wrapped in their cloaks, tending their sheep.

"Look, Isaac," cried one. "A strange star in the East."

"It is the sign of the Messiah," cried another, his voice filled with awe, "come to save the world!"

"Yes, to save the world..."

James B. Robinson

Westfield (N. J.) High School  
Teacher, Margaret B. Dietrich

Versatile Sam Pendergrast is no stranger to Young Voices readers. He's back again—and, as usual, right in step with the season! "The Fairy Park" is a gay, imaginative lyric that strikes just the right note of whimsy. Sam won a commendation for poetry in the Scholastic Writing Awards of 1950.

### The Fairy Park

Somewhere upon the hill  
Someone turned on a light.  
Who would have thought such beauty  
lay  
In that small wood at night?

It was not sensed before;  
No one seemed to know  
That fairies play at night  
Where there is ice and snow.

I thought that fairies played—  
Or worked, as some folks say—  
On pleasant afternoons  
Or near the close of day.

But they had been for sure  
Out playing in the dark  
After the sudden freeze  
Had made the wood a park.

The trees hung low with weight  
Of countless pounds of ice;  
Small gnomes ran all about  
Beneath the trees, like mice.

I guess that they were brave  
Because they knew that I  
Would never venture out  
With storm clouds in the sky.

**Sam Pendergrast, 17**

Abilene (Texas) High School  
Teacher, Selma L. Bishop

This traditionally happy time has its sad moments too. Emma Sue Rexrode's essay is bitter-sweet reminiscence about a Christmas in her childhood—and a beloved person. Emma Sue won honors in the Regional Scholastic Writing Awards sponsored by the *Newark* (N. J.) *News* and a fourth prize in the National Scholastic Writing Awards.

### "As a White Candle"

The world can become a confused place in the short space of one week. Everything had been right and happy on Christmas Day, when we took our dolls with real curled hair and drove out home to see Grandma's tree. It wasn't at all like ours. There were no electric lights or lighted houses underneath, but it was just as wonderful in its own way. It had candy canes hung on the branches, and popcorn

strings and balls. There were glittering tinsel stars and handkerchiefs filled with candy hidden in the branches.

The odors of pine and peppermint added to the homey smell of chicken dinner cooking. There were pumpkin pies and gingerbread and cranberries for dinner. I remember that I got the biggest story book I had ever seen from Grandma and that in the evening we took the lamp to the kitchen and played Lemonade and Quakers' Meeting by the stove. All day we had eaten gingerbread and candy, and Grandma gave us cookies when we left.

I went to bed that night with a tummy ache and a dream of going again to Grandma's on New Year's Day to take the trimmings off the tree and have a bonfire in the yard. It was a wonderful Christmas, and the world was perfect for six whole days.

Then the day before New Year's, early in the morning before the sun came up, a telegram arrived. Mama woke us and dressed us, not talking much and crying quietly all the time. We got into the car, but without the dolls, and went home again.

When we got there, everyone was so solemn that my sister Barbara and I dared not say a word. Uncle Frank and Uncle Ross were home too, just as at Christmas, and we all ate breakfast quietly without much appetite. I was confused and unhappy because everyone but Grandma was there.

Later, there were a lot of people in the little country church. Mama was crying all the time, and sometimes everyone around was crying too. I wanted to cry, and again I wanted to go out and play in the snow. Then I would feel that I should not want to play, and I tried to cry. That wasn't hard to do because I was frightened and perplexed. I could see the snow and icicles outside on the vines that were green in the summer. The snow on the windowsill was red and green, tinted by the colored glass, and everything looked like Christmas, but it was different be-



cause there was no tree or doll or pumpkin pie. So I sat quietly—and saw the seasons of Grandma's love go by.

I saw the spring with the honey-suckle blooming, and Grandma taking us to the orchard to feed the new lambs, and Grandma putting up the swing on the front porch and sweeping off the blossoms that fell. I saw Grandma walking up the road with us, just as far as the bend, to pick the flowers that grew along the stream.

And there was the summer when the daisies grew along the road and Grandma gave us a string and a bent pin so that we could fish for tadpoles in the pool by the pasture gate; when the coolest place in the world was the spring house and Grandma cautioned us about playing with the milk checks; when the most wonderful thing to do was to eat berries at the edge of the woods while Grandma and Mama filled their buckets; when the blind horse and the dog were too lazy to play—but Grandma was always willing.

The autumn was the time when young hearts were gay and old hands busy, but I remembered the laughing tolerance we received when we took her wild grapes for canning and dropped about the house the colored leaves and beautiful stones with which we were going to start a collection.

I heard the minister say, "Raise a memorial to your mother..." And I heard the choir singing, and Daddy carried me by Grandma's coffin. I looked at her face, not smiling but not unhappy, and I cried, for the first time knowing why. We followed those who carried the coffin out through the snow, and I thought that the snow would make a strong snowman, but I didn't care about a snowman. I saw my Grandma lowered into her new home in the ground, and I sobbed and wrung my father's hand.

I never tasted gingerbread again.

**Emma Sue Rexrode, 17**

Latrobe (Pa.) High School  
Teacher, Mabel Lindner

### See Yourself in Print

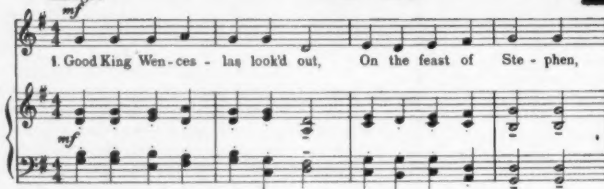
● Have you a short story, poem, or essay, of which you're especially proud? Send it to the Young Voices Editor, Scholastic Magazines, 7 East 12th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish your contribution returned. Individual criticism will be given at the editor's discretion. Material published is automatically considered for awards in the annual Scholastic Writing Awards and for honors in those areas where Regional Scholastic Writing Awards are sponsored by local newspapers.

# Good King Wenceslas

The tune is originally that of an old spring carol. In 1853, the legend of Good King Wenzel, King of Bohemia from A.D. 928 to 935, was substituted for the words of the old carol. King Wenzel was celebrated for his many kind acts to the poor.

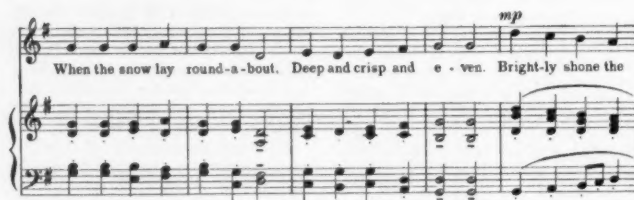


Allegro



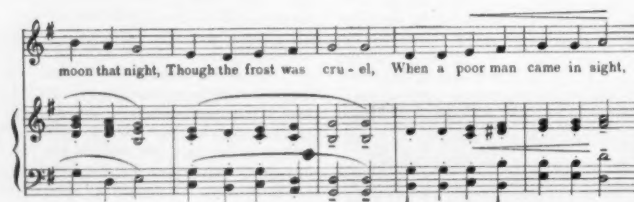
1. Good King Wen-ces-las look'd out, On the feast of Ste-phen,

"Hither, page, and stand by me,  
If thou know'st it telling,  
Yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?"  
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain,  
Right against the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes' fountain."



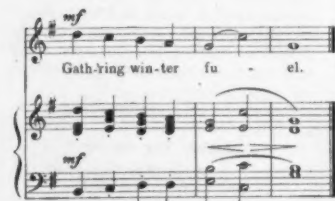
When the snow lay round-a-bout, Deep and crisp and e-ven. Bright-ly shone the

"Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine-logs hither:  
Thou and I shall see him dine,  
When we bear them thither."  
Page and monarch, forth they went,  
Forth they went together;  
Through the rude wind's wild lament  
And the bitter weather.



moon that night, Though the frost was cru-el, When a poor man came in sight,

"Sire, the night is darker now,  
And the wind grows stronger;  
Fails my heart, I know not how;  
I can go no longer."  
"Mark my footsteps, my good page,  
Tread thou in them boldly;  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly."



Gath-er-ing win-ter fu-el.



In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the Saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
Shall yourselves find blessing.

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Christmas card by Coralie Pratt, Oak Park (Ill.) and River Forest H.S., received an American Artists Group Award in 1950 Scholastic Art Awards

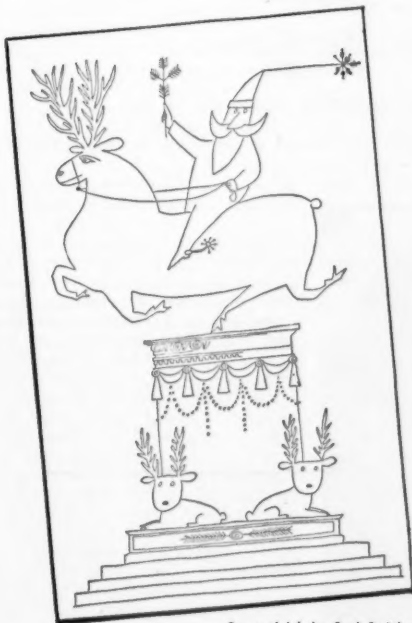


Lithograph by Shum. Associated American Artists

## Noel . . . Noel

A garland of song and Christmas card art to wish you

a festive holiday from the editors of *Literary Cavalcade*.



Pen and ink by Saul Steinberg, Museum of Modern Art, N. Y.



Detail of border of Pennsylvania German birth certificate. Metropolitan Museum, N. Y.



Woodcut by Jacob Cornelisz, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



"Clown! King of Clowns! Leave the stage—at once!" Cyrano (Jose Ferrer) orders a ham actor from the stage.

#### CAST OF CHARACTERS

CYRANO	Jose Ferrer
ROXANE	Mala Powers
CHRISTIAN	William Prince
LE BRET	Morris Carnovsky
DE GUICHE	Ralph Clanton
RAGUENEAU	Lloyd Corrigan
DUENNA	Virginia Farmer
CARDINAL	Edgar Barrier
VALVERT	Albert Cavens
MONTFLEURY	Arthur Blake
THE MEDDLER	Don Beddoe

# CYRANO

## de Bergerac

By EDMOND ROSTAND

Screenplay by Carl Foreman • Based on the Brian Hooker Translation

The story opens in the Theatre de Burgogne in Paris; the date is 1640. Cyrano de Bergerac is in the audience at the theatre for the specific purpose of driving from the stage the leading actor, Montfleury. Although a darling of the nobles and of Comte de Guiche in particular, Montfleury is a very bad performer. Cyrano orders Montfleury to leave the stage. None of the nobles dares to defy Cyrano, whose skill with the sword is notorious throughout France. Montfleury runs off the stage ignominiously.

Comte de Guiche is present at the play, together with Roxane, Cyrano's beautiful young cousin, and a pompous young nobleman, Valvert. When De Guiche inquires about Cyrano, Roxane informs him that her cousin is "... Sol-

dier, poet, philosopher, musician, playwright . . . and the best swordsman in Paris!" Valvert, who enjoys a high opinion of himself as a swordsman, determines to make a good impression upon De Guiche and Roxane by challenging Cyrano and defeating him in a duel.

Before Valvert can challenge Cyrano, a meddler makes the mistake of accosting Cyrano and, in the course of conversation, staring at his nose—a nose as famous as Cyrano himself. It is this great nose which has molded the character of Cyrano into that of a rebellious, gallant, independent spirit and one of the leading intellectual lights of 17th century France. However, it is this same nose which has built Cyrano's weaknesses—his pride, his fear of his own ugliness, and his quick temper.

As he is leaving, after booting out the meddler, Cyrano is accosted by Valvert, who attempts to insult him by calling attention to the largeness of his proboscis. Cyrano laughs, and in the famous

Nose Speech tells Valvert all the things he might have said about the nose.

CYRANO: Ah, no, young sir! You are too simple. Why, you might have said—oh, a great many things—why waste your opportunity? For example, thus: *Aggressive*: . . . I, sir, if that nose were mine, I'd have it amputated—on the spot! . . . *Curious*: how do you drink with such a nose? . . . Have you had a special cup designed? . . . *Descriptive*: 'tis a rock, a crag, a cape! A cape? Say rather a peninsula! . . . *Inquisitive*: what is that receptacle—a razor case or a portfolio? . . . *Kindly*: ah, do you love the little birds so much that when they come and sing to you, you give them this to perch on? . . . *Cautious*: take care—a weight like that might make you top-heavy! . . . *Eloquent*: when it blows the typhoon howls and the clouds darken. . . . *Dramatic*: when it bleeds, the Red Seal! . . . *Simple*: when do they unveil the monument? . . . *Military*: beware! A secret weapon! . . . *Respectful*:

Reprinted by permission of Stanley Kramer Productions from the film script of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, produced by Stanley Kramer and directed by Michael Gordon. Released through United Artists. *Cyrano de Bergerac* is available in a Bantam Book Edition.



# Sequences from the film script of the great love story...

produced by Stanley Kramer and directed by Michael Gordon

sir, I recognize in you a man of parts, a man of prominence. . . . *Enterprising*: what a sign for some perfumer! . . . Or *Literary*: is this the nose that launched a thousand ships? . . . These, my dear sir, are things you might have said had you some tinge of letters, or of wit to color your discourse. But of wit, you never had an atom—and of letters, you need but three to write you down—A-S-S . . . Ass. . . .

Valvert is reduced to name-calling, which immediately leads to the duel. Cyrano stops him for a moment before they begin, and tells him that he will compose and recite a ballade while they are fencing and, at the last refrain, kill Valvert.

Cyrano and Valvert duel before the entire audience. At the last line of the ballade, Valvert is run through by Cyrano's sword.

Cyrano's friend, Le Bret, who is captain of Cyrano's company in the Cadets, knows that Cyrano has earned the hatred of powerful men for his night's work. He rushes Cyrano away from the theatre, but not before Roxane's duenna informs them that Roxane would like to meet Cyrano for a rendezvous the following morning. This is unbelievable news to Cyrano, who has always loved the beautiful girl, but from afar, too frightened of what she might say of his ugliness to approach her. Cyrano agrees to meet Roxane at the pastry shop of his friend Raguenneau the next morning.

As they are leaving the theatre, Raguenneau comes running up to them, frightened out of his wits. He has written some comic verses about the Comte de Guiche, and De Guiche has hired half a hundred ruffians to beat up the little pastrycook. Cyrano immediately offers to see him home and tells Le Bret to stay out of it. Cyrano routs the ruffians single-handed, killing a dozen of them in the famous battle of the Port de Nesle.

At Raguenneau's pastry shop the following morning, Cyrano learns that Roxane loves him, but only as a brother. He also learns that she wants him to watch over and protect her true love, Baron Christian De Neuville, who has just been attached to Le Bret's company of Cadets. The Cadet Guards are Gascons, famous for their pride and for picking a fight with any outsider who happens to be attached to their group.

Meanwhile, Cardinal Richelieu is at breakfast with De Guiche, who is the Cardinal's nephew. He tells De Guiche that the truce with Spain is ended. He also asks De Guiche to offer Cyrano a place in his following, with patronage to provide him with funds.

While the Cadets are asking Cyrano to relate the story of the Port de Nesle fight, De Guiche enters the pastry shop and offers Cyrano a place in his following. Cyrano replies simply, "I do not follow." Cyrano's refusal, after the two battles of the night before, angers De Guiche, who stalks out, warning him.

LE BRET (*angrily*): You have done it now—you have made your fortune! He was willing to forget—

CYRANO: There you go again, growling. . . .

LE BRET: Yes! This latest pose of yours—ruining every opportunity that comes your way—becomes exaggerated.

CYRANO: Very well, then I exaggerate! There are some things in this world a man does well to carry to extremes.

LE BRET: Your precious independence—your white plume—! How do you expect to succeed in life?

CYRANO: What would you have me do? Seek for the patronage of some great man, and like a creeping vine on a tall tree crawl upward, where I cannot stand alone? No, thank you! Be a buffoon in the vile hope of teasing out a smile on some cold face? No, thank you! Eat a toad for breakfast every morning? Make my knees callous, and cultivate a supple spine, wear out my belly grovelling in the dust? No, thank you! Scratch the back of any swine that roots up gold for me with my left hand, while my right, too proud to know his partner's business, takes in the fee? No, thank you! Use the fire God gave me to burn incense all day long under the

nose of wood and stone? No, thank you! Shall I struggle to insinuate my name into the columns of the Gazette? Calculate, scheme, be afraid, love more to make a visit than a poem, seek introductions, favors, influences? No, thank you! No, I thank you! And again I thank you!—But . . . to sing, to laugh, to dream, to walk in my own way free, with an eye to see things as they are, a voice that means manhood—to cock my hat where I choose—At a word, a Yes, a No, to fight or write—but never to make a line I have not heard in my own heart. To travel any road under the sun, under the stars, not care if fame or fortune lie beyond the bourne; yet, with all modesty to say: "My soul, be satisfied with flowers, with weeds, with thorns even; but gather them in the one garden you may call your own." In a word, I am too proud to be a parasite, and if my nature lacks the germ that grows towering to heaven like the mountain pine, I stand, not high it may be—but alone!

During all this, Christian has arrived and the Cadets are goading him, daring him to taunt Cyrano about his nose. This he does, while Cyrano relates the story of the Port de Nesle, growing more infuriated by the moment, until he chases the other Cadets out while he takes care of Christian. Alone, they learn each other's identity: Cyrano, that Christian is Roxane's lover; Christian, that Cyrano is her cousin.

Christian tells Cyrano that he is speechless with any woman. . . . "I am one of those stammering idiots who cannot court a woman. . . . Together they determine that Cyrano, who has such a great gift for words, but no looks, will write and speak for Christian. For days



"Ah, no, young sir! You are too simple . . . you might have said . . . aggressive . . . 'If that nose were mine, I'd have it amputated on the spot!'" Cyrano replies to the insulting Valvert (Arthur Cavens) who describes his nose as "rather large."



"Tut, and I parry your last essay . . ." Cyrano composes a ballade as he duels.

and nights thereafter, Cyrano puts the words of love on Christian's lips and in his letters, and Roxane is entranced. Slowly she falls less in love with Christian's looks and more in love with his words, memorizing his every line: "Take my heart; I shall have it all the more. Plucking the flowers, we keep the plant in bloom."

That night, in Roxane's garden, Christian makes love to Roxane in his own words instead of Cyrano's. He fails completely and Roxane leaves the garden for her room. Cyrano, who has been listening in the shadows, applauds Christian's "success." Christian pleads with Cyrano to help him again and Cyrano has Christian call Roxane out to the balcony. But there is no time for Christian to memorize lines, so Cyrano feeds the lines to Christian from under the balcony, word by word, until it grows too difficult. Taking advantage of the darkness, Cyrano himself steps out.

ROXANE: Your words tonight hesitate. Why?

CYRANO (*in a low tone, imitating Christian*): They grope in darkness toward the light of you. They are heavy with honey, like returning bees, and yet, they must fly so high. . . .

ROXANE (*points out the bench under the balcony*): Come nearer, then! Stand you on the bench.

CYRANO (*quickly*): No!

ROXANE: Then I'll come down—

CYRANO (*recoils into the shadow*): No!—

ROXANE: And why so great a No? CYRANO (*more and more overcome by emotion*): Let me enjoy the one moment I ever—my one chance to speak to you . . . unseen!

ROXANE: Unseen?

CYRANO: Yes!—yes. . . . Night, making all things dimly beautiful, one veil over us both—How can you know what this moment means to me? If I was ever eloquent—

ROXANE: You have been eloquent— CYRANO: But you have never heard till now my own heart speaking!

ROXANE: Why not?

CYRANO: Until now, I spoke through . . .

ROXANE: Yes?—

CYRANO:—through that sweet drunkenness you pour into the world out of your eyes! But tonight . . . but tonight, I indeed speak for the first time!

ROXANE: For the first time — your voice, even, is not the same.

CYRANO (*passionately; moves nearer*): How should it be? I have another voice tonight—my own, myself, daring — (*He stops, confused*)

ROXANE: Why, daring?

CYRANO: Is it not daring to be myself to you, and have no fear of moving you to laughter?

ROXANE: Laughter—why?

CYRANO (*struggling for an explanation*): Because . . . What am I . . . What is any man, that he dare ask for you? Therefore my heart hides behind poetic words and phrases. I come here to pluck down out of the sky the evening star, then, losing heart, content myself with little flowers.

ROXANE: But are they not sweet, those little flowers?

CYRANO: Not enough sweet for you and me, tonight!

ROXANE (*breathless*): You never spoke to me like this . . .

CYRANO: No. I have made rimes for you. But not now! How can we insult this night, this moment, with tinsel phrases?

ROXANE: But . . . poetry?

CYRANO: Love hates that game of words! It is a crime to fence with life — I tell you, there comes one moment, once—and God help those who pass that moment by!—when beauty stands looking into the soul with grave, sweet eyes that sicken at pretty words!

ROXANE (*very low*): Yes . . . that is love—

CYRANO: Love! I love beyond breath, beyond reason, beyond love's own power of loving! Your name is like a golden bell hung in my heart; and when I think of you, I tremble, and the bell swings and rings—Roxane! . . . Roxane! . . . along my veins, Roxane!

ROXANE: Yes . . . that is . . . love.

CYRANO: Yes, that is love—that wind of terrible and jealous beauty, that dark fire, that soaring blinding music . . . Yet you may take my happiness to make you happier, even though you never know I gave it to you—only let me hear of your joy! . . . Do you begin to understand, a little? Can you feel my soul, there in the darkness, breathe on you?—Oh, only tonight, now, I dare say these things—I . . . to you . . . and you hear them! . . . In my most sweet unreasonable dreams, I have not hoped for this! It is my voice, mine, my own, that makes you tremble there in the green gloom above me — for you do tremble, as a blossom among the leaves — you tremble, and I can feel, all the way down along these jasmine branches, whether you will or no, the passion of you trembling . . .

ROXANE: Yes, I do tremble . . . and I weep . . . and I love you . . . and I am yours . . . and you have made me thus!

CYRANO (*after a pause; quietly*): What is death like, I wonder? I know everything else now . . . I have done this, to you—I, myself . . . Only let me ask one thing more—

CHRISTIAN (*under the balcony*): One kiss!

CYRANO (*to Christian*): You! . . .

ROXANE (*startled*): You ask me for—

CYRANO: I . . . Yes, but—I mean— (*To Christian*) You go too far!

CHRISTIAN: She is willing!—Why not make the most of it?

CYRANO (*to Roxane*): I did ask . . . but I know I ask too much . . .

ROXANE: Only one—Is that all?

CHRISTIAN: All!—How much more than all—I know—I startle you—I ask . . . I ask you to refuse—

CHRISTIAN (*to Cyrano*): But why? Why? Why?

CYRANO: Christian, be quiet!



Roxane (Mala Powers) describes the man she loves. Cyrano learns it is not he.

ROXANE (*leaning over*): What is that you say?

CYRANO: I know I go too far, and so I say to myself: Christian, be quiet! . . .

(*The light of a lantern approaching throws its beams into the garden, and there is the sound of someone approaching.*)

CYRANO: Listen — someone is coming—

(*Roxane closes her window. The flashes of light come closer, and then a Capuchin Monk enters the garden, carrying a lantern. He hears them, sees them.*)

CAPUCHIN: Oh, gentlemen — I am looking for the house of Mademoiselle Roxane Robin—

CHRISTIAN (*quickly, as Cyrano stares*): This is not the house. That way—to the right—keep to the right—

CAPUCHIN: I thank you, sir. I'll say my beads for you to the last grain.

(*He turns and goes, the light of his lantern gradually becoming fainter.*)

CYRANO: Christian, that was a scurvy trick—

CHRISTIAN (*urgently*): Win me that kiss!

CYRANO: No!

CHRISTIAN: Sooner or later—

CYRANO: True . . . that is true . . . Soon or late, it will be so because you are young and she is beautiful—(To himself) Since it must be, I had rather be myself . . . (*The window re-opens. Christian hides under the balcony*) the cause of . . . what must be.

ROXANE (*out on the balcony*): Are you still there? We were speaking of—

CYRANO: A kiss. And what is a kiss, when all is done?—a vow taken before the shrine of memory—a secret whispered to listening lips apart.

ROXANE: Hush! . . .

CYRANO (*going on*): A moment made immortal, with a rush of wings unseen—a sacrament of blossoms, a new song sung by two hearts to an old simple tune—the ring of one horizon around two souls together, all alone!

ROXANE: Hush! . . .

CYRANO: Why, what shame?—

ROXANE: No! No shame! . . . Then come! . . . Gather your sacred blossom . . .

CYRANO (*to Christian*): Go! — Climb!—

CHRISTIAN (*hesitates*): No — Would you?—not yet—

ROXANE: Your moment made immortal . . .

CYRANO (*pushing him*): Climb up, animal!

(*Christian springs on the bench, and climbs by the pillars, the branches, the vines, the balcony railing.*)

CHRISTIAN: Roxane! . . . (*He takes her in his arms*)



Cyrano offers to write love letters to Roxane for Christian (William Prince).

CYRANO (*very low*): Ah! . . . Roxane! . . . I have won what I have won—the feast of love—and I am faint with hunger . . .

(*On the balcony, Roxane and Christian part, breathless. The beams of a lantern approach. Roxane becomes aware of it. She leads him inside. The window closes. Cyrano looks up at the empty balcony.*)

CYRANO (*softly*): Yet, I have something here that is mine now and was not mine before I spoke the words that won her—not for me! Kissing my words—my words upon his lips . . .

The Capuchin monk returns with a letter for Roxane. It is a note from De Guiche who tells her he is coming later in the evening to see her. Roxane, however, reads the letter aloud in front of the monk, Christian, and Cyrano, as though it is an order from the Cardinal, via De Guiche, that she and Christian be married immediately. The monk goes into the house with Roxane and Christian to perform the ceremony, and Cyrano is left outside to intercept De Guiche.

While the marriage is being performed, De Guiche arrives. Cyrano forestalls De Guiche's entrance until the marriage is performed.

De Guiche has the last word when he learns of the marriage. He informs them that the entire regiment of Cadets leaves at once for the front. Roxane implores Cyrano to watch over Christian, and Cyrano promises her at least a letter a day from Christian.

At the Spanish front, the Cadets are besieged. In the midst of all this, Roxane arrives in a carriage driven by Ragueneau. Roxane refuses to leave, determined to stay through the coming fight. When she and Christian are alone

she tells him how much his daily letters—all of which have been written by Cyrano and sneaked out by Cyrano through the lines—have meant to her.

Roxane tells Christian that she has been frivolous, that she would love him now, handsome or not, for his soul. Christian realizes that what she is actually saying is that she loves Cyrano, for the words have been his. Christian goes immediately to Cyrano with this news, demanding that he tell Roxane of his own love for her.

Cyrano does not believe Christian, but he goes to find Roxane anyway. While Cyrano is on his way, Christian volunteers for a scouting mission and is shot. The shot is heard before Cyrano can tell Roxane the truth, and Christian is brought in, mortally wounded. Before Christian dies, Cyrano tells him that it is really Christian whom Roxane loves, and so never is able to tell Roxane of his own love for her. Over Christian's heart, Roxane finds a farewell letter, written by Cyrano, which she takes as her last memento of Christian.

At this point, the Spanish forces attack. In the ensuing battle Cyrano fights like a madman. Just when the fight seems hopeless the French learn they have won.

Fifteen years later, Cyrano has aged and with him De Guiche, Ragueneau and Le Bret. Only Roxane seems the same, living always in a convent, forever in mourning for her lost Christian. During a visit De Guiche tells Roxane to warn Cyrano that his writing is angering many people and that he must be careful. There is a plot afoot against Cyrano's life.

Indeed, at this very moment Cyrano is being watched as he leaves Ragueneau's, watched by a hired lackey who lures him into the street with taunts. Chasing the lackey up an alley, Cyrano realizes that he has been lured into a

## About the Author . . .

Next to some of Shakespeare's plays, Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* has been one of the world's most frequently performed dramas. Son of a French journalist, Rostand was born in Marseilles in 1869. His literary career began with a volume of light verse which he presented to his wife as a wedding gift. But he achieved fame with his revival of the romantic drama in verse of which *Cyrano* is a brilliant example.

*Cyrano* was written in 1896 as a vehicle for Constantin Coquelin, then the greatest actor in France, and it has been pretty much a one-man show ever since. When Brian Hooker prepared his excellent English translation of Rostand's play for Walter Hampden (on which the current screen play is based), *Cyrano* became very popular in this country.

trap. But it is too late. Cyrano is run down and badly injured by a horse-drawn cart involved in the plot.

In the garden of the convent, Roxane, busy with her embroidery, awaits Cyrano's regular Saturday afternoon and evening visit with growing impatience. In all the fifteen years he has never been late before. When Cyrano arrives he is in great pain. He knows that he is, at that very moment, dying. However, he hides that fact from Roxane.

ROXANE (*bantering*): After fourteen years—late for the first time!

(*Cyrano sinks into a chair.*)

CYRANO: Yes, yes, maddening! I was detained by—a visitor . . . an old friend of mine. At least a very old acquaintance—but most unexpected.

ROXANE: Did you tell him to go away?

CYRANO: For the time being, yes. I said: excuse me—this is Saturday—I have a previous engagement, one I cannot miss, even for you. Come back an hour from now . . .

ROXANE: Your friend will have to wait. I shall not let you go until dark.

CYRANO (*gently*): Perhaps a little before dark, I must go . . .

(*He leans back in his chair and closes his eyes. Roxane waits, wondering a little at his silence. Then, with an effort, he opens his eyes again.*)

CYRANO: Now, may the devil admire

me, if I ever hope to see the end of that embroidery.

ROXANE (*smiling*): I thought it was time you said that.

(*A breath of wind causes a few leaves to fall.*)

CYRANO: The leaves—

ROXANE (*raises her head and looks away through the trees*): What color—perfect Venetian red!

CYRANO: Yes—they know how to die. A little way from the branch to the earth, a little fear of mingling with the common dust—and yet they go down gracefully—a fall that seems like flying!

ROXANE: Melancholy—you?

CYRANO: Why, no, Roxane!

ROXANE: Then let the leaves fall. Tell me now the Court news — my Gazette!

CYRANO: Let me see — (*More and more pale, struggling against pain*)

Saturday, the nineteenth: The King fell ill, after eight helpings of grape marmalade. Marmalade will no longer be served at Court. Sunday, the twentieth: The Royal Pulse became normal. Monday . . . Everyone was talking about the success of Moliere's new play. (*His face more and more altered*) Tuesday: The King fell ill, after six helpings of marron glace. Marron glace will no longer be served at court. Wednesday: The Count de Fiesque spoke to Madame de Montglat. Thursday: Nothing. Friday: Nothing . . . Saturday the twenty-sixth . . .

(*His eyes close; his head sinks back; silence. Roxane, surprised at not hearing any more, turns, looks at him, and rises, frightened. She runs to him, crying out.*)

ROXANE: Cyrano!

CYRANO (*opens his eyes*): What is it? . . . (*He sees Roxane*) No—oh no—it is nothing—truly!

ROXANE: But—

CYRANO: My old wound—at Arras—sometimes—you know . . .

ROXANE: My poor friend!

CYRANO: Oh it is nothing; it will soon be gone . . . (*Forcing a smile*) There! It is gone!

ROXANE (*standing close to him*): We all have our old wounds—I have mine—here . . . (*Her hand at her breast*) under this faded scrap of writing . . . It is hard to read now—all but the blood—and the tears . . .

(*Twilight has begun to fall.*)

CYRANO: His letter! . . . Did you not promise me that some day . . . that some day you would let me read it?

ROXANE: His letter?—You . . . you wish—

CYRANO: I do wish it—today.

ROXANE (*gives him the little silken bag from around her neck*): Here . . . Open it, and read.

(*She goes back to her work, folds it again, rearranges her silks.*)

CYRANO (*unfolds the letter; reads*): "Farewell Roxane, because today I die—"

ROXANE (*surprised*): Aloud?

CYRANO: "I know that it will be today, my own dearly beloved—and my heart still so heavy with love I have not told, and I die without telling you! No more shall my eyes drink the sight of you like wine, never more, with a look that is a kiss, follow the sweet grace of you—"

ROXANE: How you read it—his letter!

(*The letter drops from his nerveless fingers into his lap, but he goes on, his eyes closed.*)

CYRANO (*continuing*): "I remember now the way you have, of pushing back a lock of hair with one hand, from your forehead—and my heart cries out—"

ROXANE: His letter . . . and you read it so . . .

(*The darkness increases imperceptibly.*)

CYRANO: "Cries out and keeps crying: 'Farewell, my dear, my dear, my dearest!'"

ROXANE: In a voice . . .

CYRANO:—"my own heart's own, my own treasure—"

ROXANE (*dreamily*): In such a voice . . .

CYRANO:—"My love—"

ROXANE: As I remember hearing . . . long ago . . . But how can you read now? It is dark . . .

(*She comes near him, softly, without his seeing her; passes the chair, leans over silently, sees the letter in his lap, stares at him.*)

CYRANO:—"I am never away from you. Even now, I shall not leave you. In another world, I shall be still that one who loves you, loves you beyond measure, beyond—"

(*Roxane puts out a trembling hand and drops it on his shoulder. He starts, turns, and sees her there close to him. A little movement of surprise, almost of fear; then he bows his head.*)

ROXANE (*softly*): And all these fourteen years, he has been the old friend, who came to me to be amusing.

CYRANO: Roxane!—

ROXANE: It was you.

CYRANO: No, no, Roxane, no!

ROXANE: And I might have known, every time that I heard you speak my name! . . .

CYRANO: No—it was not I—

ROXANE: It was . . . you!

CYRANO: I swear—

ROXANE: I understand everything now: The letters—that was you . . .

CYRANO: No!

ROXANE: And the dear, foolish words—that was you . . .

CYRANO: No!



"Let me enjoy . . . my one chance to speak to you unseen!" Cyrano speaks words Roxane believes are Christian's.





"Forgive me for being light and vain and loving you only because you were handsome." On the battlefield Christian realizes it's Cyrano whom Roxane now loves.

ROXANE: And the voice . . . in the dark . . . that was . . . you!

CYRANO: On my honor—

ROXANE: And . . . the soul!—that was all you.

CYRANO: I never loved you—

ROXANE: Yes, you loved me. Even now, you love me!

CYRANO (his voice weakens): No!

ROXANE (smiling): And why . . . so great a No?

CYRANO: No, no, my own dear love, I love you not! . . . (Pause)

ROXANE: How many things have died . . . and are new-born! . . . why were you silent for so many years, all the while, every night and every day, he gave me nothing—you knew that—you knew here, in this letter lying on my breast, your tears—you knew they were your tears—

CYRANO (holds the letter out to her): The blood was his.

ROXANE: Why do you break that silence now, today?

CYRANO: Why? Oh, because—

(Le Bret and Raguenau enter, running.)

LE BRET: What recklessness—I knew it! He is here!

RAGUENAU: He has killed himself, Madame, coming here!

ROXANE: He—that faintness—What is it?

CYRANO: Nothing! I did not finish my Gazette—Saturday, twenty-sixth: An hour or so before dinner, Monsieur De Bergerac died, foully murdered. (He uncovers his head, swathed in bandages)

ROXANE: Cyrano—What have they done to you?

CYRANO: "Struck down by the sword of a hero, let me fall—steel in my heart, and laughter on my lips!" Yes, I said

that once. How Fate loves a jest!—Behold me ambushed—my battlefield a gutter—my noble foe a lackey . . . It seems too logical—I have missed everything, even my death!

(There is the sound of the vespers bells tolling.)

ROXANE (calling): Sisters—sisters!

CYRANO (holding her hand): No—do not go away. I may not be here when you return . . .

(The bells have stopped. There is the sound of the first organ notes.)

CYRANO: There—a little harmony is all I need. Listen . . .

ROXANE: You shall not die! I love you!

CYRANO: No—that is not in the story! You remember—when Beauty said "I love you" to the Beast that was a fairy prince, his ugliness changed and dissolved, like magic . . . But you see, I am still the same . . .

ROXANE: And I—I have done this to you! All my fault—mine!

CYRANO: You? Why, no, on the contrary! I had never known womanhood and its sweetness but for you. My mother did not love to look at me—I never had a sister . . . Later on, I feared the sweetheart with a mockery behind her smile. But you—because of you I have had one friend—more than a friend—across my life, one whispering gown . . .

ROXANE: I never loved but one man in my life, and I have lost him—twice . . .

CYRANO: I would not have you mourn any the less that good, brave, noble Christian; but perhaps—I ask you only this—when the great cold gathers around my bones, that you may give a double meaning to your widow's weeds

and the tears you let fall for him may be for a little—my tears . . .

ROXANE (sobbing): Oh, my love! . . .

CYRANO (suddenly trembling, he lurches erect and pushes her away):—Not here! . . . Not lying down! . . . (They spring forward to help him; he motions them back.)

CYRANO: Let no one help me—no one!—Only the tree . . . (He sets his back against the trunk) It is coming! . . . I feel already shod with marble . . . gloved with lead . . . Let the old fellow come now! He shall find me on my feet—sword in hand—(Draws his sword)

LE BRET: Cyrano!—He's delirious—

ROXANE (half fainting): Oh, Cyrano!

CYRANO: I can see him there—he grins—He is looking at my nose—that skeleton—what's that you say? Hopeless?—why, very well!—But a man does not fight merely to win! No—no—better to know one fights in vain! . . . You there—Who are you? A hundred against one—I know them now, my ancient enemies—(He lunges at the empty air) Falsehood! . . . There! There! Prejudice—Compromise—Cowardice—Ah, you too, Vanity! I knew you would overthrow me in the end—No! I fight on! I fight on! I fight on!

(But his sword falls from his failing grasp. He stands there, empty-handed, dying.)

CYRANO: Yes, all my laurels you have given away and all my roses; yet in spite of you, there is one crown I bear away with me, and tonight, when I enter before God, my salute shall sweep all the stars away from the blue threshold! One thing without stain, unspotted from the world, in spite of doom, mine own! (He straightens) And that is . . .

ROXANE (she sobs):—Cyrano—!

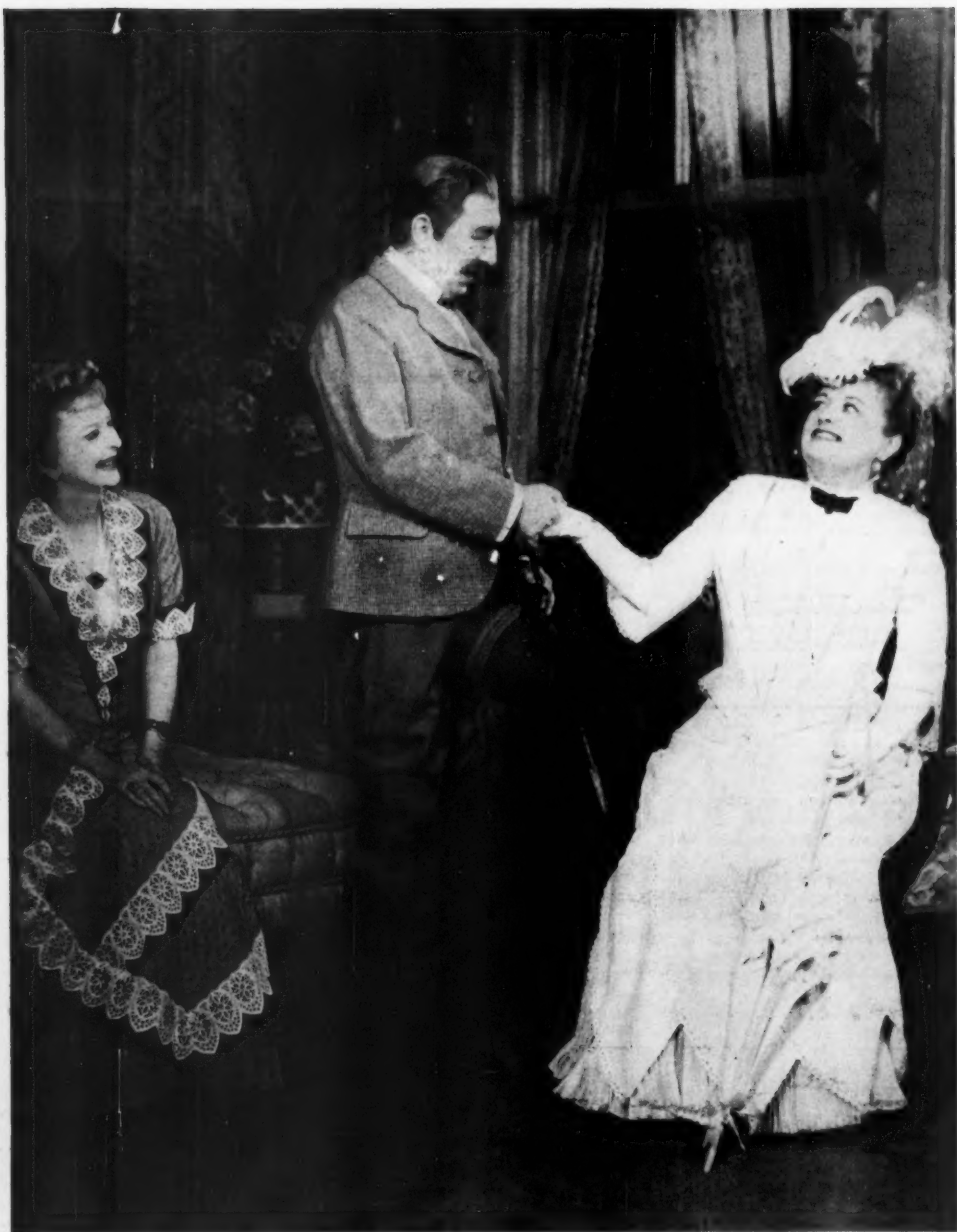
CYRANO: My white plume . . .

(He crumples, falls to earth. Roxane sinks to her knees beside him.)



"I never loved but one man in my life, and I have lost him—twice." Roxane discovers Cyrano's love as he is dying.





Gladys Hurlbut (right) with Dorothy Stickney and Howard Lindsay in *Life with Mother*. (Vandamm photo)

# NEXT WEEK EAST LYNNE!

BY  
GLADYS HURLBUT

Jericho

*Book condensation in the author's own words; the memoirs of a beloved actress who recounts her hilarious days in stock companies and the success of Broadway*

**W**HEN I graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in the wartime spring of nineteen eighteen, I gave myself five years to be an established actress and ten years to be a star. I prepared an exact schedule for my rise to glory, or rather, as the Academy taught us, I prepared a "shedule."

The Academy found me very puzzling. It was a sophisticated and high-minded institution and no student was admitted unless he swore that he wished to enter the professional theater. I didn't look a bit professional. I had been brought up in boarding schools where I had stayed summers and winters and many empty vacations. I had gone to the theater three times in my life, to see Kellar and Thurston the magicians, Maude Adams in *Peter Pan* and Mrs. Patrick Campbell in *Pygmalion*. I had never known a boy and I was so achingly self-conscious that I hid behind imitations of grown-up heroines that I longed to be like. This made me seem disgustingly affected. I was the youngest member of my class but I was unborn when it came to worldly knowledge.

I had just graduated from a New England school in black disgrace because I had decided to heed my call to be an actress. I was alone in New York and I had a small room at the Studio Club, a branch of the Y.W.C.A. I prayed every night and morning that I might learn to be a fine actress. I was not at all beautiful. I was short and round and redheaded and very nearsighted. I held

my figure under control by living on black coffee and ambition but I could do nothing about my full moon face. My hair was very bright and bushy and I wore it tied back with a big bow and a short, fat curl hanging down each cheek. Inside, I felt like Ethel Barrymore but I think I looked like Charley's Aunt!

The Academy was often called "Sargent's School" and I found it still brooded over by its founder, Franklin Sargent, a melancholy gentleman of great dignity and very long legs. Charles Jehlenger was Mr. Sargent's first assistant and is still the beloved tyrant of the Academy. He has spent his life inspiring the stage-struck. He has worked himself into frenzies over untold numbers of young hopefuls and I am proud to have shivered under his lambastings. He screamed maledictions at us and beat his breast over our ineptitudes. After "Jehilly" had made fun of my carriage and shrieked that my middy blouse looked like a bed pillow and mimicked my composite accent, made up of a little from the speech of every roommate I'd ever had, and after I had learned to worship him for caring so much, one shining day he laughed out loud at a piece of comedy business I had devised for him. His laugh was as short and sharp as a pistol shot in the dark auditorium and I promptly died of joy.

Each graduate was given three letters of introduction to the Broadway producers. One of mine was to Winthrop

Ames, who was my idol. It was unsealed and it said that I was one of the most promising ingenues the Academy had found in many years. I raced to Mr. Ames' office and flung myself at his door. It was opened by a very highly charged young man who said it was his business to see everyone for Mr. Ames. He read my letter and dropped it into the wastebasket. I howled at him to give it back and I said further that it was not his, it was Mr. Ames' and my life depended on reaching him. We glared at each other with mutual fury and the young man said there really would be no use giving it to Mr. Ames because there was definitely nothing for me in that office!

Winifred Lenihan had a letter too and she was charming to the young man and Mr. Ames took a great fancy to her and put her in *The Betrothal* that fall. She told me that the young man said that while I MIGHT be "the most promising" ingenue, I was certainly the most disagreeable one on Broadway. We never met again for many years and then under the happiest circumstances for me. We have both calmed down now and the young man, whose name is Guthrie McClintic, is himself an illustrious director.

I didn't dream then that the word "promise" was to stay with me as my identification and my despair.

The class of eighteen advanced upon Broadway each morning. We had been given typewritten lists of all the theatri-

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cal producers and each morning we would be turned away from their outer offices. At noon we made the rounds of the casting agencies and were told, "Nothing today, dear. Come back tomorrow."

In the afternoons we called upon the office boys of the managers who had been listed in the morning papers as having bought new plays. When I'd exhausted every lead I had that day, I sat for a while in the lobby of the Hotel Astor and watched for celebrities and pretended I was waiting for a beau to take me tea dancing.

I had moved to a small, proper hotel in the thirties near Fifth Avenue. My mother was always away, working hard to send me the money for "my chance."

Each night I wrote letters to producers, right down my list of names, Ames to Ziegfeld. I said quite simply that I was ready now to be an actress but that I was having a little trouble meeting them. I asked how they could afford to take chances of missing the stars of tomorrow and I said I would appreciate an appointment at their earliest convenience. The producers seldom answered.

The Packard Theatrical Agency was the biggest and the best. Ada Humbert ran it with Mr. Packard. She was a tough, kind woman who looked like a school teacher and who sang in an up-town choir. She was besieged all day long and there were two outer offices to protect her from the mob. A girl sat behind a glass partition and took down our names as we fought our way to her. Miss Humbert looked at the list every few minutes and if she had anything for you, the girl called out your name and you went inside in the envious hush that always fell over the crowd of out-of-work actors. Miss Humbert had seen me in some school plays and she registered me with several others from my class.

I always took off my spectacles as I came up the stairs and after that I didn't recognize anybody, but my classmates knew how nearsighted I was and I didn't know anybody else. I felt very thrilled, giving the girl my name and I tried to make my voice sound like a leading woman's, vibrant and compelling; then I stood back against the wall and watched my fellow actors.

When two weeks passed after my graduation and I still had no job I was a little panicky. And then, one day as I started down the stairs, I heard my name called. "Gladys Hurlbut! Is she still here?" I plowed back to the glassed-in girl. I forgot my low, vibrant voice and I dropped my purse and my spectacles. "I'm Gladys Hurlbut! I'm still here!" "Come back at five o'clock, dear. Miss Humbert wants to see you." My voice was shrill and incredulous and the crowd roared with laughter at the way

I said, "Oh—REALLY?" The laugh slithered all around me and I wanted to die. I groped my way down to the street. I hurried to my room and took a bath and pressed my best dress. Then I lay down and told myself to be calm and know that I was on my way. I was, indeed, on my way to the ferry!

Miss Humbert gave me a slip of paper that said she was sending me to the director of a stock company across the river for a week's jobbing. I was sent for one of the little girls in *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. I got the job! Of course I was the only one sent for it but I got it and I was to be paid thirty-five dollars for one week of rehearsal and one week of playing.

Stock companies weren't anything like the summer rurals that we know now. The Pictures and then the Talkies wiped out the old kind of stock companies and took away the best chance that actors had of learning their business. There were over a hundred stock companies east of the Mississippi when I went on the stage. They lived in a town for a season of twenty to a hundred weeks and they put on a different play every week. They dished up last year's hits in five rehearsals and in between they revived the old thrillers that still did business, *East Lynne* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Homestead* and *Trilby*. The stock companies were as much a part of the towns as the libraries and the zoos; artistically they were closer to the zoos! The actors had very little privacy. The towns knew what they were doing every minute of the day and most of the night and they were supposed to wear their glamour like a cape—on the streets and behind the shades in their furnished rooms. Sometimes a city would have two companies at once and then the rivalry between the followers would make today's fan clubs look like tired old stick-in-the-muds.

Stock acting was the most sweatshop kind of work I ever heard of, and the most exhausting for the brain and the body. Fifteen hours a day in the theater, many towns played daily matinees and the Middle West played seven days a week, two of the old on Saturday, two of the new on Sunday. At night the actors studied, an act a day until they knew their parts. They furnished their own wardrobes and the women sewed and pressed and trimmed and washed—always with their crumpled, frayed, typewritten parts for next week propped up before them. At night they kept them under their pillows, firmly believing they soaked in that way.

But since the best way to learn acting is to act, there were actors growing all over the land—like wheat—and nearly every star on Broadway had served his apprenticeship in stock.

The company was finishing a long

season and they were too worn out to know or to care what a wonderful aggregation they seemed to me. The company was in the doldrums, their spirits as tired as their wardrobes. The leading man had long since stopped apologizing for eating garlic and the leading woman hurried through her lines so she could go and sit down. The actors went through their parts with all the spontaneity of a treadmill and I was so eager that I'm sure they wanted to kill me—or they would have if they'd had the energy.

*Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* was a very popular play about a little girl who lived with a mean old aunt on a farm. The aunt was horrid to Rebecca and her little friends and the child sold soap so that she could make enough money to run away. The leading man bought it all and Rebecca fell off a wall in her excitement. The first act was played in the barnyard and the cross aunt chased Rebecca's playmates away. I was the little girl who hid in a barrel lying on its side by the well. When the other children scooted off the stage, I was to pick up the barrel and hold it over my head as I ran so that just my legs could be seen. That was all of my part. Two lines, "Look out!" and "Wait for me!" and then—off in the barrel. I was only in the first act.

On the opening day we rehearsed right through until six o'clock. We went over our lines huddled in the lounge of the theater because the crew were putting up the set on the stage. I boomed my two lines out so that everybody jumped and the leading man laughed at me and had to be prompted. In stock, no one ever saw the scenery until the opening performance, dress rehearsals were unheard of, and the best that happened was that the actors were allowed on stage a few minutes before curtain time to try out props and effects.

When we broke up for supper the stage manager said the first act set might be ready at seven forty-five if we wanted to look it over.

There was a drug store next to the theater and I went in and had a cup of coffee and a sandwich. Before I went back into the theater, I stood for a moment looking down the alley. The sky was rosy and gold now but when I saw it again it would be black and I would be a real, paid actress!

I dressed in the extras' room, down under the stage. The stage manager called, "Half hour!" I heard him knocking on all the dressing-room doors and then he came downstairs and knocked on mine. I thought it was very kind of him and said so. He grinned at me and handed me a telegram. Then he told me I could come up and try getting into my barrel. The telegram was from

Mother. It said she knew this was the beginning of great nights for me and that she was bursting with love and pride. I pinned it up in my mirror and promised I would never fail her. Then I fastened a handkerchief with a big safety pin to my pinafore, the way Mother had done to me when she sent me to kindergarten. While I did this I was planning a little of my autobiography. "I proved that first night that there is a way to say two lines and walk off in a barrel that can create a real impression." Brother, what a prophet I was!

Before I went upstairs I took off my spectacles. I knew I wouldn't be able to see much but I told myself it would be easier on Broadway where I would have dress rehearsals and time to set everything. The stage was ready and the barnyard looked wonderful. The whole thing was in one piece: house, fence, trees and barn. Center stage was the old well and my barrel lay beside it.

We rehearsed my barrel scene. The stage manager said, "I'll show you where I cut a hole for you to peek through." I started crawling in and out of my barrel. When I got the cue, after I had wriggled inside of it, I was to get up on my knees, holding it over my head. If I held it high enough I could then stand up, and looking through my peek hole (without my spectacles on) I could try to find my way to the gate and run off, still in the barrel, with just my legs showing.

I tried it over and over until my make-up was running down my neck and my arms were sore and scratched. The stage manager said if I didn't want to wear out my barrel I'd better stop. Then, seeing my fright he asked if I'd like to try it once with all the actors on. I mopped my face, pulled out a splinter and nodded. Everybody was called on-stage. They were all nice about it except the ingenue who said she'd sit in the wings and call out her cues. The stage manager said Oh no! she'd come out and act—and take her exit for me. She had to run off just before I did. She was very bored about the whole thing and the stage manager said, "O.K., Gladys, you make a hit in the big barrel scene tonight—and What Price Ruffles!" This remark sealed my doom. The ingenue flounced on-stage and I scurried in my barrel. When I ran off, the stage manager warned the ingenue that she must be sure to leave the gate wide open for me. If she let it close I would have no way of opening it, with my hands busy holding up my barrel.

Overture was called and everybody wished me luck—except the ingenue. We huddled in the wings and suddenly the music was louder. The meant the

asbestos curtain was up. The director from his place at the switchboard called, "Places, please!" We were silent and afraid. I think the old director must have been sorry for his tired children for I heard then for the first time the words that were to sustain me on many a first night in many a town. "Cheer up, kids," he called. "Eleven o'clock must come!" He signaled and the music stopped in mid-note. He whispered, "Lights," and the house lights were pulled. I could hear the audience murmuring. It was the moment! Then the director whispered, "Curtain! Curtain, please!" A stage hand pulled the heavy ropes, the old curtain shivered, was still, and then, jerked hard, it rose up to the flies.

There was no time now to be more frightened, I went on almost at rise. My hands were cold and my face was burning; my heart felt as big as my body and my legs were rippling. I heard the audience—the composite noise it made as it waited. It would always seem like a restless animal; sometimes it would switch its tail at me and sometimes I would be able to make it purr, but, on the night of my debut I thought only of finding my barrel in the fog of my near-sightedness and my stage fright. I got inside my barrel and then my cue came to stand up—"Who's that brat in the barrel?" The ingenue was right ahead of me, running. I got to my feet and started. The barrel was heavy and it knocked against my knees and made me stagger but I kept going. I saw the gate—I timed it to get there right on the ingenue's heels. The audience was laughing nicely. I was at the gate and then—I heard it slam shut! I couldn't stop. I heard actors yelling but I couldn't stop. I crashed. First the gate went down under me. The gate took the fence, the fence took the front of the house, the trees came down and the bushes came down, and way over to the side, the barn tottered and fell!

The actors ran for open ground, the stage hands came tearing upstairs from the basement. I lay in my barrel under the wreckage and in the midst of this chaos, I heard the audience laugh as I have only heard it one other time in my life. It wasn't a laugh, it was a roar that built up and up until it filled the world with sound. Through it I finally heard the stage manager—right on-stage beside me. "Get off the stage! Get out of that barrel!" I backed out and started running. I cleared fences and greenery and shattered buildings as only the hunted can and I never stopped running until I was out of the theater and in an old buckboard waiting by the back door. I huddled on the floor and pulled the seat cushion over my head to shut out the awful laughter. Someone

banged the stage door shut and it was quiet.

I tried to think if I had seen any bodies on the stage. I thought I would soon hear the ambulance coming. Would they send the audience home? Was someone standing in the midst of all that destruction asking if there was a doctor in the house? I'd never go back in that theater again. I'd stay here until morning unless they found me and arrested me. I'd get to my mother and tell her I was a failure. I'd had my big chance and the "impression" I had made was to knock down the whole production and maybe kill the actors! I soaked the dirty cushion with my tears. Then I heard the stage manager's voice. "Miss Hurlbut!" "Oh God, don't let him find me—please dear God!" "MISS HURLBUT!" He was there. He lifted the cushion off my head as you'd pick a stone off a squashed bug.

"What's the matter with you?" he said. "You didn't take the curtain call."

"The call? You mean they finished the act?"

"Certainly we finished the act. We do it every night."

"But—how could you? I knocked down all the scenery."

"Well, we put it up again. What're you so upset about? It wasn't your fault. anyhow, you got the biggest laugh of the season!"

I held his hand tight. "You mean I'm not fired?"

"Aw, shut up. You make me sick."

I followed him into the theater, trying to blow my nose on the pinned-on handkerchief. He turned at the stage door. "Hey, don't forget the matinee tomorrow!"

I tried to thank him, but I couldn't speak. He grinned and pulled one of my curls that had started out to be a pigtail.

"You can take it from me, Gladys," he said. "You were a smash hit all right!"

### The Ten, Twenty, Thirt'

After my disastrous debut in the stock company, I became part of a noble experiment and worked harder than I ever have before or since—and had the loveliest time! Edith Ellis, author of several successful plays and a woman of enormous vitality, had a notion and sold it to the management of the Great Northern Hippodrome in Chicago. Then she stormed into the Packard office, gathered up a company of unsuspecting actors—including me—and we were off, for the Loop!

Miss Ellis believed (and when she believed, she was terrific!) that the average, run-of-the-mill vaudeville audience would adore the very best plays ever written IF they weren't warned in advance anything about Art. She per-



sued the men who ran the Great Northern to sneak us in between the vaudeville acts in her own condensed versions of famous plays. It worked too! For almost a year the habitués of the small-time house, the "ten, twenty, thirt's" (meaning the price of admission) came to see the usual animal acts and the jugglers and the musical glasses, and remained to watch Moliere and Ibsen and Shakespeare, Clyde Fitch and Pinero and Sir Henry Arthur Jones.

I was ecstatically, exuberantly grateful to Miss Ellis, but I can't say the same for my fellow actors. They were soon so exhausted that when they weren't working, which was a good four hours out of the twenty-four, you had to hold a mirror to their mouths to see whether they were alive. This was because we kept to the policy of the theater and gave four performances a day, seven days a week, and a new one every Monday! We also kept to Miss Ellis' policy, which was to have a complete dress rehearsal, with scenery, make-up and costumes, on Sunday night, right through until breakfast.

After four weeks, the leading woman had hysterics and she screamed that she'd rather die of starvation than from such sweatshop abuse, so Miss Ellis quickly decided that enthusiasm was what counted most in her scheme and made me alternate leading lady with Peggy Boland, the ingenue. I had been engaged for fifth business, which meant the smallest part every week. I made the leap with all my customary force and the leading woman went back to seconds.

We all lived in the Great Northern Hotel, which was attached to the theater by an arcade, and we never went outdoors except for shopping for wardrobe once a week. Our dressing rooms were down under the stage and there was where we really lived. It was a cozy kind of domesticity and I had never been as happy. The vaudeville actors mistrusted us and stayed by themselves but I could watch them keeping house, their babies lying in trunk trays, their sewing machines whirring, their sterno kettles boiling in between their four shows a day. We were a success. I learned a great deal every week, and I had need for it! I had no time for awe nor room for fear. My head was crammed with lines, cues and business and my mornings and late nights were spent on "next week," while my afternoon and evenings were all out for "this week."

I studied while I made up, while I took a bath, while I ate and while I worked on my wardrobe. I slaved for Miss Ellis and she rewarded me with her faith and tireless instruction.

We saw little of the vaudeville acts. One Monday I had to rush out for hair-

pins. I lost cartons of them every week. I hurried up the circular staircase, and hanging on to the rail, propelled myself to the top and smack into the face of an enormous, live lion! He was peering down the stairs but I didn't ask him who he was looking for. I took the nearest exit, which was to fall backwards through the rails and land on the floor below, on my head. When I came to, I was all right except for a big bump on my head.

While I was making up, a little man in a gray satin suit and wearing a big yellow mustache came to my room. "Lady," he said, and his voice shook, "what did poor Leo do to you that you should make trouble for him?" I tried to tell him that I loved all animals, it was just that I was surprised to bump right into a loose lion! "Everybody knows Leo. He wouldn't hurt a fly." The little man grew more indignant. I said I was terribly sorry but he shook his head sadly. "A cat can look at a king"—and I pictured the other acts listening to my scolding—"but poor Leo, he can't look at anybody." I said I wasn't going to cause any trouble, really. "Oh no, you only near-kill yourself. That means no more walks for Leo. He don't ask much, just a little walk around the stage before the matinee. You should be ashamed."

Leo was a tired, smelly old lion with no teeth. I brought him hamburgers all week but they did cut out his little walk.

Miss Ellis stayed on for many months. I'm sure I'd have stayed until they swept me out but for a very unglamorous reason. I got the earache! When I was a baby I'd had mastoiditis and they hadn't operated. This left me with a chronic infection and I've had spells of abscesses ever since. I told my mother I was in for it and she wired me that it was from overwork, that if I didn't give up my outlandish job, she'd come and get me; to remember that I was still under age and that she had a good mind to report Miss Ellis to the Humane Society!

### The Sticks

My train left in the morning and I had breakfast in the station and bought a *New York Times*. A squib in the dramatic column leapt out at me and I knew I had found what I was to do next. It just said: "George Tyler will send out a company of Laurette Taylor's successful play, *Happiness*, this fall."

I worshipped Miss Taylor and I had seen the play three times. All her plays then were written by her husband, Hartley Manners, and they were vehicles for her luminous and roguish gift of comedy. This part was that of a little dressmaker's apprentice from Brook-

lyn who had a happy heart and reformed a lot of bored society people. I knew I could play it. Here was "My Own"—coming straight to me! Wonderful morning! Wonderful world! I rushed to the Western Union office and dashed off a telegram to the famous George Tyler who produced Miss Taylor's plays and many others for illustrious stars. I said, "Dear Mr. Tyler, I realize you have never heard of me but I beg you not to decide on anyone for Laurette Taylor's part in *Happiness* until you see me. I will telephone you on my arrival tomorrow. Gladys Hurlbut."

I wired my mother I couldn't come to the Adirondacks for our vacation until I'd settled some business and then I started in on George Tyler. Mr. Tyler would have none of me. The girl at his switchboard wouldn't let me talk to him and his office boy had strict orders to keep me away. I saw that he had a wire or a special delivery letter from me every day; I covered pages with my descriptions of how I understood the part, how I was exactly right for it, and how quickly I would prove it, if he'd just let me in! I didn't say much about my experience but I made my carefully rehearsed allusions to "Years of experience on the Pacific Coast." However, I assured him, I was still young. (I was nineteen.)

Finally I had a brief note from him. It said, "Dear Miss Hurlbut: Since I have never heard of you and the entire success of the tour depends upon the actress who plays Laurette Taylor's part, I cannot consider you and I assure you that this is final."

I was greatly encouraged. I felt sure he didn't have anyone or he would have said so. I increased my barrage, my attacks grew sharper and more frequent, the gist of my communications was "How can you afford to refuse me five minutes?" and "Do you always leave it to others to discover new stars? I will call you in the morning."

Then—one lucky day he answered the phone himself! When I said, "This is Gladys Hurlbut—" he groaned and in a voice of one who is licked said, "All right. Come on over. It won't do a bit of good but come on." I said I'd be there in ten minutes and he answered that he didn't doubt it.

My dress was blue foulard with big white dots and I wore a yellow straw poke bonnet. I still had those fat red curls and Mr. Tyler laughed at me as he took me in his office. "Now, Gladys," he said, "I can't give you this part but we've got to have some peace around here. What can I do to get rid of you?" "You can let me read the part for you and then if I'm not right, I'll never bother you again." He looked at me a long time and my heart fluttered so my dress trembled.



"You do look like Jenny in the first act," he said. "But she grows much older." I was ready for that: "You can't expect everything, Mr. Tyler. Miss Taylor was really too old for the first act. I'll be a little young for the last act."

"My dear child, Miss Taylor is a great actress!"

"Oh yes! You could never hope to get anyone as good as she is, could you?"

He walked to the window. He wasn't sending me home! Oh, please God, make him let me read for him. He scratched his head. "Gladys, is there anybody I could ask about you? Anybody I know who's ever heard of you?"

I didn't dare suggest the Academy; I didn't want him finding out I'd only graduated that spring. I tried to sound as if I was starting a long list: "Well, there's Edith Ellis—" He brightened a little. "That's something," he said. "I know Edith Ellis."

When I left his office I had a copy of the script and his word that I could read for him and Hartley Manners. Mr. Tyler begged me to let him alone until Mr. Manners got to town, and I went to the Adirondacks.

I found Mother all done up in aprons and ruffled gingham. My grandfather was there too. I rehearsed *Happiness* in the woods all day until Mr. Tyler wrote me. I took off with a heart full of purpose and a brain full of dialogue.

On an empty stage with two kitchen chairs under a bright light I pretended to read for my judges. I knew every line by heart and couldn't have seen the pages without my glasses on. Miss Taylor's stage manager cued me. He read all the other speeches with the sharp individuality of a typewriter. After each scene I would look out into the blackness of the theater. No one spoke to me. I thought that if they had gone away they would have told us, in order to spare the stage manager. When I had done four scenes from four acts and smiled once more into the abyss, Mr. Tyler's voice came to me. "Wait there, Gladys." I waited and they came up on the stage. Mr. Manners took my hand and George Tyler, a man of few words, said, "Come in tomorrow and sign your contract."

The next day the *Morning Telegraph* carried two columns on the theatrical page, headlined, "George Tyler's New Discovery." There was the story of how I had pestered Mr. Tyler. The story said that Mr. Tyler was also sending out another newcomer in *Pollyanna* this season and it would be interesting to see which one of us reached Broadway first. The other girl's name, it went on, was Helen Hayes.

On the opening night in Battle Creek, I didn't know where anything was, including the laughs. I went to bed hearing Mr. Tyler saying over and over

again, "The entire success of the tour depends on the actress who plays Laurette Taylor's part."

The next morning I read my first notice. Down at the end of a story of the play, it said: "In the part of Jenny, a little girl with red hair worked very hard."

I learned about alibis that tour. First, business was bad because everybody owned a Ford and wouldn't stay home. Then the folks all got radios and wouldn't go out. If the news was bad, no one had the heart to go to the theater, and if it was good they didn't need entertainment. Bad weather kept them in, fine weather sent them riding in the country. The greatest alibi of all was creeping up on us but we wouldn't face it. It didn't have a voice yet but it was getting bigger and better every day and it lurked around the corners, waiting for a chance to get in our theaters and take down our old velvet curtains and put up its silver screens. In the meantime, the customers on the road were getting fed up with bad companies sent out under the lying banners that read "Original New York Cast." And girls like me, barging around in big star parts that were vehicles and not real plays anyhow, didn't help much. In Omaha our closing notice went up.

"George Tyler's Discovery" went back to see him but he didn't laugh at me that time. He said the theater was a lottery and you had to wait until your number came up; and then, for an epitaph, he said to "keep in touch."

I did a little work on my Ten Year Plan and decided to get a job as a leading woman in a regular stock company and stay in it—maybe the whole winter! I was spared the foreknowledge that it wasn't to be one winter but nine years, off and on, and between tries at Broadway! Nine years in mill towns and big cities, steel towns and spas. From Montreal to New Orleans and from Atlanta to the sea, I was to cling to stock until the talkies drove us out of business and there were no more actors bringing glamour to the whole land.

Every season I'd come back to Broadway with more knowledge, more promise and less time! A stock leading woman was a big fish in a little sea—in the stock towns—but on Broadway she was a minnow!

One season John Golden broke my heart. He was sorry and it wasn't his fault, I guess. He gave me the lead in a play with a wonderful, comic idea. The Chicago public, where we opened, loathed the play and me. We closed.

I learned something because of that catastrophe; I learned that you can never choose just what will happen when. Sometimes when you are broken-hearted because of the plans you had that didn't come through, a thing can

happen that is even better than your plans! In the John Golden play I met Nila Mack, the "Let's Pretend" lady who has won all the awards there are for children's radio programs, and we have had a rich and hilarious friendship. And Nila brought to us Dorothy Stickney and Howard Lindsay. Our friendship with the Lindsays has lasted longer than their fabulous success, *Life with Father*, and is more precious to me than all the star parts in the world.

### Life with Mother

When the last page was typed I went into the kitchen to contemplate my cook books. I wanted to cook a fine dinner for Allen, my husband. I have learned that there is balm in making a soufflé and hope in every young green salad. We were living in Beverly Hills in a very retired kind of block. I am gray now and a step-grandmother.

Allen came back from his afternoon walk with the evening paper under his arm. For twenty and more years the sound of his steps coming toward me has lifted my heart.

"Your forehead's cloudy," he said. "What's the matter?"

"Don't misunderstand, darling," I said. "I've had a fine time and I love every one of my ruts, only I can't help wishing that after all those years I could have finished up my acting with one small touch of success." And the telephone rang.

It was Sticky, Dorothy Stickney calling from New York. She wanted to know how we were and Allen told her.

"There's a slump in Pictures and all the writers are out in their patios writing THAT book. Gladys just finished hers. She feels misspent."

"Good!" said Sticky. "She needs a change and I know what to do. I'm coming to Hollywood to make a picture and what do you say we swap houses? You two come to New York and stay with Howard and let me have your house?"

"Oh—we can't," I groaned. "Our house has inhaled all our money."

"Money? You won't need any. Just for the train."

Sticky is wonderful about money. She just expects to have it and she does. Of course it's quite a help that she's married to Howard Lindsay, who with Russel Crouse has written *Life with Father*, *Life with Mother*, *State of the Union* and produced *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Also Sticky and Howard were the original stars of *Life with Father* and she is one of the best actresses in the whole world. These things do not lead to bankruptcy.

Howard got on the phone:

"What's your book about, Gladys?"

"When I was a stock company actress."

"That should be all right. Nobody acted more than you did."

"Another life, Howard. A heartbreaking life. I wouldn't act again for anything on earth."

There was a slight pause and Howard said:

"By the way, we've just finished *Life with Mother* and we're mailing you a copy. I'd like you to read it on the train."

Coming back to New York was like growing young. The Lindsay house is large and full of all the things that Sticky loves. Howard said not to talk about the new play until Russel got there. We went up to the library and saw their Pulitzer award hanging on the wall. I was happy to be with my friends now—at their peak. When Russel came in, we talked of Anna, whose marriage to Russel we had worked so hard to promote that they gave us ten per cent of it on their wedding day. I hadn't seen their baby or their new house—but I was going to the next day.

"Please," I said, "now can we talk about the play? I think you've passed a miracle."

I'd been almost afraid to read it. After all, to write a sequel to the most successful play in the history of the American Theater, a play that had run for seven years on Broadway, was a huge undertaking.

The boys were as pleased as if my opinion mattered and I thought they seemed to be building up to something. They sort of twinkled at me.

"What did you think of Bessie?" Howard asked me.

"Oh, Bessie's a very good part. Father's old sweetheart, come back to tease him. No one has EVER teased Father."

"We worried about Bessie," said Russel. "She's dangerous. She could easily go overboard being silly."

"I know," I said. "But if she believes she's still as pretty and cute as she once was, won't she get away with it?"

"She might," said Howard and smiled at Russel.

"What's the matter? Why are you smiling like that?"

"You really think she's a good part?"

"Of course I do. Don't you?"

"Would you like to play Bessie?"

Howard asked me and I said, "Yes." And then I did the biggest double take of my life—

"WHAT? What did you say?"

"We thought about you all the time we were writing it. We kept thinking how you would sound."

"Oh—it's impossible. It's been fifteen years. Look at me!"

"You look like Bessie," they said. "And you're ebullient, like Bessie."

"Of course," Howard added, "it would be up to Oscar Serlin, who's going to

produce it, and Guthrie McClintic, who's going to direct it—but if they wanted to take a chance—just for the spring tryout in Detroit—"

"In that case," I said, "there'd be time to get someone else before the fall—Oh—what am I saying!"

Oscar Serlin took me up to see Guthrie McClintic. I kept wondering if he'd remember me. I'd never seen him since I graduated from Dramatic School. "She MAY be the most promising ingenue," he'd said. "She's CERTAINLY the most disagreeable one!"

On this day the doors were wide open for me and Guthrie sat behind a big desk and was charming. He'd grown gray and famous since the day I annoyed him so. He has directed nearly all the stars there are and produced most of his wife's plays. She is Katherine Cornell.

"Hello," he said. "I haven't seen you in years."

"I've changed—I mean—"

"Who hasn't?" he answered.

"I mean, I'm a writer now. I haven't acted in fifteen years."

"That doesn't worry me. You look like Bessie. Doesn't she, Oscar?" Oscar nodded. (Oh, the years I never looked like any part I wanted!)

Guthrie looked at Oscar. "I'm tempted to settle for Detroit."

The Empire Theater spells magic to every actor. It is old and creaky and peopled by glamorous ghosts. The old Empire effaced itself for our first rehearsal, withdrawing into the shadows and leaving us only the bare stage with its bright, unshaded light and the long table and kitchen chairs, the ash trays and the pitcher of water, the paper cups and the stage managers anxious to start us off right.

I had to wait ten minutes before my first lines. I sat at the table and tried to listen to the play but my heart began to pound and I wound my legs around the old chair and I could feel a stocking catch on a nail and the runs go down to my ankle. Before my cue came I had run back through the years until I was the same frightened, uncertain actress I always used to be. There wasn't a shred of writer's viewpoint left in me. I was awful.

I was rusty and inelastic all during rehearsals. It had been so long since I'd acted and I hated not being as quick as I used to be. I knew what I wanted to do but it wouldn't come out that way. Guthrie was patient and understanding and Howard and Sticky always had time to keep up my courage and every other day or so I would have a moment of sharp joy—like a pain—because I was acting again.

There came the day when Guthrie left us alone on the stage and went out in front to see us and we missed

him. Then, we had "run-throughs!"

Guthrie told us that we would go through the play without stopping, no matter what! And that we would have a small audience which would include Miss Cornell. It was an afternoon of horror for me.

We had another run-through the next night and there were more people out in front. I was still glassy-eyed but I knew I was a little better. Afterwards we waited on-stage for Guthrie to give us his notes and he came over to me and said, "There's someone who wants to meet you," and it was Noel Coward. It seemed he had been hiding in the balcony and he loved the play and he said, "You're true." When I told him how long it had been since I'd acted, he said, "Acting's like bicycling. You never forget how but you wobble when you first get back on."

We arrived in Detroit in the early morning and were told to rest until night when we would have our dress rehearsal. I called Room Service for my lunch. All I said was, "This is room 1606," and a woman's voice answered, "And this is Gladys Hurlbut. I thought you'd never call." When I asked her how she knew, she said she'd looked up my room number and that she used to see me act every week for a year, in Toledo, twenty-four years ago! My public.

There was a big sign outside the theater, "World Premiere," and *Life* and *Look* magazines followed us around, photographing us doing practically everything we had to do. We opened and the play was a great success and I had a telegram saying, "Welcome back to the stage." It was signed, Noel Coward.

Then we rehearsed all the time. That was why we were there, to get things as right as possible before the fall.

Before we closed, Oscar came toward me, and he was smiling. He said, "You know you're official for New York!"

In the fall we went to Philadelphia for another two weeks. As we approached our New York opening, I suffered every kind of stage fright that ever visited an actor. I swept across the stage on legs made of cotton and there were nights when there was nothing between my knees and the floor except my prayers. Then I'd get my legs back and they'd shake. Each word I spoke was a triumph over fear.

We were being fine-tooth-combed for Broadway. Every gesture, every inflection must be set. We knew that on opening night we would only be able to do what we had established so hard that it came out almost unconsciously.

Came the day when Guthrie concentrated on me for a nightmare hour. Everyone was worried about my part

being too broad even if I played it right. I had to be silly and a little preposterous.

The play would lose if I failed to keep within the bounds of comedy and slipped into farce. Comedy must be believable, farce need not be. Guthrie devoted this hour to taking me apart. He said nothing about my nerves or fringes but he had a list of errors that devastated me. I sneaked in extra words. I used my right arm too much. "Thank the Lord, your left arm is anchored to your parasol." I wiggled my bustle when I walked and I had "water in my voice" when I was coy. Everything he said was true but my spirit was very frail and I thought he was losing confidence in me.

On my way to dinner, I met Guthrie on Walnut Street. He looked very handsome and debonair and he smiled at me. There was something sure about him that made me remember all the plays he had nursed the way he was nursing ours and all the actresses he had helped as he was trying to help me. I suddenly found the thing I had been seeking and I took hold of his arm as the people pushed around us.

"Guthrie, I've always done things the hard way. I never had anyone like you to help me. I've been acting as if I had the responsibilities of the atom bomb. From now on, I'm going to remember that I'm in the best of hands and let you worry for me. On you it looks good."

"You dope — didn't you know we wouldn't let you go wrong?"

### Opening Night

The word about us on Broadway was terrific. It was frightening because nothing mattered except what the critics would say. The Empire was scrubbed and painted and our names were painted in gold letters and framed in glass to be hung on our dressing-room doors.

Oscar Serlin knew who would be sitting in every seat on opening night. There was a chart in his office showing the name of every ticket holder. No one would be out in front just for fun that night. No one could ever have bought a seat at the box office. The critics had their aisle seats and many stars would come to judge us, the Hollywood scouts would be there and the big-shot producers and the backers. Each actor had two tickets for friends. They would be too sick to laugh and they would be careful not to applaud too much. Critics don't like that either.

A fortune was at stake. Howard and Russel were trying to do it again. Howard and Sticky would be on trial again. Oscar's reputation and his future were up for decision. It would all be settled in three hours by the critics,

"the nine cold men." The lines of the hymn kept running through my head, "The hopes and fears of all the years, are met in Thee tonight!"

On the afternoon of the day, we sat huddled together in the Gents' lounge and whispered our lines to each other. Guthrie didn't say much. He sort of watched our pulse. He did speak about "saying the play over" to himself the night before and I realized he knew every word of it by heart!

When "five minutes" was called, we went down on the stage and Guthrie was there. His face was broken into little lines of care. We took our places for our entrances and the orchestra played old-fashioned tunes from one of the upper boxes. The curtain rose.

Howard got an ovation and the little boys came on and played their scene with him. Guthrie waited with Sticky on the other side of the stage from me and he stood by her until she made her entrance. I just barely knew that she was wonderful. The mold of rehearsals had set and it was going the way it should be, but not anywhere near as good as we knew how to be—this was a night for caution. It seems too bad that it must be so.

Sticky came off on my side of the stage and stood with me waiting to go on again when I made my first entrance. We held each other's hands and someone fixed my bustle. Just before my cue came, I heard a whisper—"Gladys!"—and Guthrie was there. He had crossed over under the stage.

I have no memory of the performance at all. I know that I put down each line as if it was made of eggshells and that I moved as we had planned it. I was in shock and I think you could have stuck a hat pin through my arm and I wouldn't have felt it.

When the play was over, we knew it had gone smoothly and that there

had been much applause, though that doesn't always mean much.

We went to Peg Day's apartment for a party. She is the widow of Clarence Day who wrote the original *Father* and *Mother* stories about his own parents. We sat and waited. Someone said, "If we could only find a way to open on the second night!" The phone calls were coming in and most of them were for Russel who had his scouts out. There were friends of ours in the room and they were full of praise but it was hard to listen because we were waiting for the verdict. Allen and I went home about three and we got into bed but we left the light on. At a quarter of four, Russel called. He had the *Times* and the *Tribune* and the *News* and the *Mirror*. He said they were sensationally good. He said they were better than the notices for *Life with Father*. We couldn't feel any joy yet—we were too exhausted, but we went to sleep.

There is no happy ending on an opening night, not even if the play is a great hit. It is an ordeal and you have to recover from it before you can feel happy. After a while it began to be wonderful to act. The play was flowering again and we could give the best performances we knew how.

My fiftieth birthday came during our first weeks. I had letters from people I hadn't seen in twenty years and I saw friends from stock days and old school chums. There was hardly a matinee that someone didn't knock on my door and say, "I don't suppose you remember me?" One night a handsome gal turned up on her way to the presidential inauguration. She had been second woman when I played a humid stretch in New Orleans one winter and we'd gone back to New York to beat on the producers' doors together. But when her father died she went home and took over his bank and ran his farm. She said she was having a fine life and that she liked politics. I should think she would! Not long after that her picture was on all the front pages and the story under it said that Georgia Neese Clark had been chosen by the President to be the first woman Treasurer of the United States!

Christmas came and we were full of projects. We hung red and silver bells on all the dressing-room doors and we sewed for babies and the little maids in the play gave an egg nog party. I visited every night with the stage crew while I waited for an entrance and they put up a wreath in my stage dressing room. I met their sons on leave from the services and I knew about their hobbies and their wives.

The play is a happy one about decent, loving people and our audiences were warmed by it. It always touched me when I would come down for the

### Crossword Puzzle Answer

S	D	E			N	E	D	E	
S	E	E	R	T	E	V	I	R	D
T	H	G	I	N		D	E	P	O
A	S	A		E	A	A	D	A	I
P	A	R		A	V	A	R	T	W
			T	E	T				
D	N	E			N	I		D	E
E	L			R	F	I	E	C	A
L	E	G	N	A	L	O	A	R	C
S	T	N	I	T	E	G	R	E	S
S	A	P	S			A	E	P	

Sure, you can turn this upside down if you want to. But why peek and spoil your fun? Puzzle is on the following page of this issue.

curtain calls and the sound of the laughter coming from the front would be richer and different from the sound I had heard in the second act. It was because they had grown to love the people in the play and it had changed the quality of their laughter.

Sticky lost her voice during Christmas week and had to miss two performances but I knew she'd be back for Christmas Eve if she had to play in sign language. We have spent our Christmas Eves together whenever we could for many years and she always thinks of her first Christmas in New York and the promise she made to herself.

She had just arrived in New York, a frail and lonely little girl from North Dakota, come to seek her fortune. She took a furnished room on the upper West Side. Sticky dreaded staying in her room but there wasn't any other place to go because she didn't know one single person in New York. And it was Christmas Eve.

She had her dinner in a white tiled restaurant on Broadway and it was snowing, it honestly was. And then, using all her courage and two of her precious dollars, she went downtown and bought a seat for a play that night! The star was Mitzi Hajos and the play

was *Lady Billy*. She says she can still remember how good Mitzi was and how she read a certain line. When the intermissions came and the audience left her sitting all by herself, she scurried after them and tried to cuddle up to groups in the lobby, hoping no one would notice she was alone. She was afraid they would think there must be something awful the matter with a girl all alone on Christmas Eve. The snow was really deep when the play was over and she got wet and cold and cried all the way home. But before she went to sleep she polished up her dreams and she made a vow that some day she would play on Christmas Eve on Broadway and that she would always think about the people in the single seats and try to give them back what Mitzi had given her that night.

So she came back to us and her voice was well. The Empire was joyous. There was a radio upstairs in one of the dressing rooms playing Christmas carols and our rooms were a litter of tissue paper and bright ribbons. The children ran up and downstairs showing us their gifts and everyone's door was open.

Sticky and I stood together in the wings before the overture was over. The audience sounded festive too. We

could hear children's voices and a growing expectancy. They were glad they were out there and we were grateful beyond the telling. Our manager came back. "We can go up on time," he said. "Everybody's in. Glad you're back, Miss Stickney."

"Thank you, Johnny. I had to be. Oh, Johnny, do you happen to know, do you think there might be any people out there, even one person, who might be alone tonight?"

"As a matter of fact, I know there are," he said. "Funny you asked that. We sold quite a few single seats for tonight."

The audience grew quiet as the house lights dimmed. It was the magic moment of curtain rise.

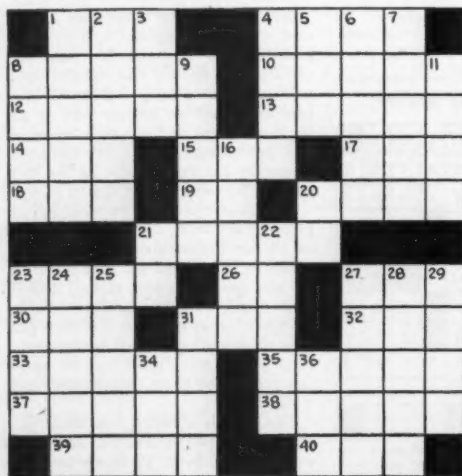
"Merry Christmas!" I whispered and Sticky looked up into the flies where the Empire ghosts watch.

"Merry Christmas!" she answered and then she looked out front and said, "Merry Christmas—to every single person!"



## Season's Greetings

● There are 48 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (\*) pertain to Christmas and Christmas carols. See how many of these starred words you can get. Allow yourself four points for each starred word (there are 15) and one point for each of the others. If you get all the starred words, give yourself a bonus of seven points for a total score of 100. You'll find the bonus easy to make. Answers are on page 31, but don't look now. Wait until you have completed the puzzle. Why spoil your fun?



### ACROSS

1. Green vegetable.
4. Mineral springs.
8. Woolen fabric used in clothing.
10. Gives color to.
- \*12. Christmas song of joy or praise.
- \*13. "Hark the herald \_\_\_\_\_ sing."
14. Highest card.
- \*15. Tree symbolic of Christmas.
- \*17. "O little town of Bethlehem How still we see thee \_\_\_\_\_"
- \*18. Berries of the holly tree are of this color.
19. Within.
20. Transmit.
21. Small entrance.
23. Market.
26. Abbrev. for "avoir-du-pois."
27. Strike sharply.
30. Eddie Cantor's wife.
31. Yes.
32. Al Jolson's real first name.
33. Ran in an easy pace, as of a horse.
- \*35. "Silent \_\_\_\_\_, holy \_\_\_\_\_"
37. Be behind the wheel of a car.
- \*38. These are in every home at Christmas.
39. Paradise.
40. Abbrev. for "editors."

### DOWN

1. \_\_\_\_\_ on earth; good will to men.
2. Made a mistake.
3. In the past.
- \*4. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Bethlehem shone at Christmas time.
5. You use this to fasten things with.
6. Two lines meet to form this.
7. German beer mug.
8. Mark after wound heals.
9. Like a goblin.
- \*11. Youngsters use this on snow at Yuletide.
16. Decorate a surface by setting in it pieces of ivory, wood, etc.
- \*20. \_\_\_\_\_ Nicholas brings gifts to all good children at Christmas.
- \*21. "\_\_\_\_\_ came upon a mid-night clear."
22. An important occurrence.
- \*23. "Peace on earth and mercy \_\_\_\_\_ God and sinners reconciled."
- \*24. "O come let us \_\_\_\_\_ him!"
25. Swift.
27. Was very angry.
28. Remains of a fire.
29. Taps lightly.
31. Arabian port and gulf bear this name.
- \*34. The night before Christmas is Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.
36. Anger.





BARBARA HOLLAND



RICHARD REINERTSON

## They Were Winners

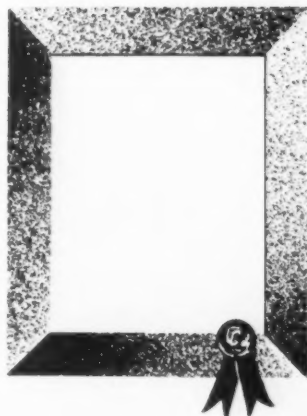
You, just as Barbara and Dick, may be a winner in the Scholastic Writing Awards. Over 8,000 frames of honor are on reserve for 1951.

For over twenty-seven years now, high school students have been sending the best of their writing to Scholastic Writing Awards. They might not have won honors the first time they tried. Perhaps not even the second. Norman Katkov, contributor to *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, and author of *Eagle At My Eyes*, and *A Little Sleep, A Little Slumber*, tried for four years before winning an Award. But if a spark is there, it manages to shine.

And once that spark has shone—it is difficult to put it out. Writing Awards winners have gone on to win scholarships, publish their short stories or poems or other works, become successful authors. Maureen Daly and Mary Vardoulakis both have written Dodd Mead prize-winning novels. Whitfield Cook, author and playwright, Kimball Flaccus, poet, and Gladys Schmitt, best seller author, were once Scholastic Awards winners. The thrill of seeing their first story or poem in print is something they will never forget.

Jesse Stuart, author of the best sellers *The Thread That Runs So True* and *Hie to the Hunters*, has been a national Scholastic Writing Awards judge for many years. He has watched many winners like Barbara and Dick know this first thrill. He has this to say to them and to you:

"If you plan to be a writer, know definitely you are going to be one. Never stop looking for material only when you sleep. Then sometimes dream material. Never stop writing, writing, writing. Then revise, revise, revise. Put away your work, let it cool longer, go back to it and revise again. Try to make each piece of writing a masterpiece. Try to write anywhere from 10 to 50 books in your lifetime, then pray to God one of them will really be a masterpiece and live on after you have left this stage. Writing, creative writing, in its many forms, is good and big and great. If you're going to be a writer, do the profession honor."



In fifteen areas throughout the nation preliminary Scholastic Writing Awards programs are conducted by leading newspapers. You are eligible for local Awards if you live in Colorado, Connecticut, southeastern Florida, north central Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, southeastern Michigan, Mississippi, St. Louis, Mo., New Hampshire, New York capital district, Cleveland, Ohio, western Pennsylvania, north central and west Texas, Vermont, Virginia peninsula or the Washington, D. C. metropolitan district. Winning entries are then sent on to the national Awards.

Ask your teacher for a 1951

Writing Awards Rules Booklet, or write

**SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS**

**7 E. 12th Street, New York 3, N. Y.**



# Chucklebait



**I**F Dr. Clement Moore had penned "The Night Before Christmas" in the age of radio and television, his royalties might have made those currently being collected by Johnny Marks for *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer* look like small change. Actually, the author of the most famous of all Christmas poems made very little profit on his lines.

Dr. Moore's poem, written in 1822, was not published under his name for more than 20 years after he composed it. A professor of Greek and Oriental literature in a theological seminary, Dr. Moore dashed off his immortal lines on the spur of the moment to read to his children on Christmas Eve. When a friend sent a newspaper a copy of the poem, it immediately delighted readers. When it was reprinted in many other newspapers and magazines, Dr. Moore was greatly alarmed lest it become known that he was the author. He felt it would be undignified for someone of his scholastic standing to be associated with children's jingles.

Today the professor's serious works are forgotten, but his name is preserved in the encyclopedias as the author of "The Night Before Christmas."

## The Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And Mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter;  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below;  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:

"Now Dasher! now Dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet, on, Cupid; on, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now, dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With a sleigh full of toys—and St. Nicholas too.

And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof,  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof,  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot!  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack;

His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a broad face, and a little round belly,  
That shook, when he laugh'd, like a bowlful of jelly.

He was chubby and plump; a right jolly old elf;  
And I laughed, when I saw him, in spite of myself.  
A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings—then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew, like the down off a thistle,  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
"Happy Christmas to all! and to all a good night!"



## Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year